

DESIDERIVS.  
**A MOST GOD-  
LY, RELIGIOVS, AND**  
delectable Dialogue, teaching the true  
and ready way, by which we may  
attayne to the perfect Loue  
of God. (✠✠)

**FIRST WRITTEN IN SPA-  
nish,** and since translated by diuers per-  
sons into the Italian, French,  
Dutch, and Latin tongue,  
and now lastly into  
the English.

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*The:*  
*5.17.*

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CHAPTER I.  
*Desire goeth on Pilgrimage.*



Here liued sometimes in a vast  
and solitarie desert, a holy &  
Religious Father, whose chie-  
fest care, and daylie exercise,  
was with fasting, watching,  
and praying, continually to  
serue God. This holy Father was moued on a  
time with a zealous and hartie desire, to finde  
out the true & ready way, (if possibly he cold,)  
to true wisdom, and the loue of God. There-  
fore he resolued with himselfe to trauaile ouer  
the whole world, if happely he could finde a  
Master able to instruct and direct him herein.  
With this resolution he departed from his Cell,

A ij.

and

and then first beganne his determined journey. Now after this holy Father, (whome we will call, *Desiderius* or *Desire*) had measured the desert, with a long and wearisome trauaile, he first encountred a reuerende old shepheard : who fedde his flocke, in a pleasant greene meddow, beautified with variety of sweet smelling flowers : with the sight of whome, being greatly comforted : hauing long trauailed, & yet mette with no man, he saluted him in manner following. My louing Brother, now thanked be God who hath directed me to meete you here. To whome the shepheard returned answere : I likewise am gladde of this our meeting : tel me, what seeke you in this solitary desert ? I seeke quoth *Desire* a certayne Knight, who as I vnderstand is trauailed this way.

## CHAPTER. 2.

*He instructeth Prelates and spiri-  
tual Pastors.*

**T**His Pilgrim, & this Pastor, thus mette together, *Desire* attentiuely noted with admiration, the great care, and diligence, which this good shepheard vsed, towards the flocke committed to his charge, first, he had in his hand a rodde, or wand, on his right side, there hong a scrippe, or bagge: on his feete, he wore wodden pattens, his garment was a long coate; on his lefte side, at his girdle, there hong a little horne,

horne, and on his right side, an other somewhat greater, two great dogges followed him on each side, and fast by, was his homely cottage, fenced & compassed about with bushes, and thornes. The shepheard, perseauing how attentiuely *Desire* beheld and noted him, asked of him, the cause thereof: and if he neuer had seene a shepheard before? D E. Truly Brother, I haue oft seene manie, but neuer one so well prouided as your selfe, wherefore pardon me: and if it be not troublesome to you, answer me to that I shall aske of you. S H. You shall not be offensiuely to me, if your demandes, be but such as I may answere. D E. Wherefore doe you carrie this staffe in your hande? S H. I meruaile not a little, why you aske me that, for considering, your selfe are a Shepheard, as I am, howe can you be ignorant of the vse of it? I vse this staffe, both for my ayde, and stay, that going vp and downe, with my sheepe, I stumble not and fall: and also, therewith I order and rule my flocke, directing them therewith, to keepe their right way, and prohibiting them, to wander and stray, but to keepe together, not allowing each one to goe severall wayes: for if anie one chance to seuer from my flocke, or to follow after anie other, then my selfe, with this staffe, enforce him & drue him, vntill

he vnite himselfe againe to his fellowes. D E. What doe you carry in this Scrippe that you weare? S H. Foure thinges : A tinder boxe to strike fire, wherewith in colde winter I may warme my selfe, and dresse such meate as serueth my fellowes, and me, also bread, onyons, a box of oyntment, and salt, whereof especially, I oft giue my shepe. D E. Why doe you weare wodden pattens on your feete. S H. To keepe me warme in Winter, when it is Frost, and Snow: for if I should weare more costly, or curious, they would soone be worne out with much going about. D E. What signifieth this long garment that you weare? S H. This is my habit, without which, no man would know me to be a shepherde. D E. Whereof is this garment made? S H. of sheepe skinner. D E. Might it not bee made of Wolues or other beausts skinner? No, for my sheepe would easilie finde that by the smell, and so woulde presently fly away from me: but seeing me cladde in their owne skinner; they loue and followe me continually. D E. What haue you in the horne that hangeth on your left side? S H. An oyntment, wherewith I dresse my sheepe that be infected with the scabbe. D E. What in the bigger, that hangeth on the right side? S H. A marking stone, whereby I know them from other mens sheepe. D E. For what vse doe

doe you keepe these dogges ? SH. They barks in the night, and keep away the wolues, whereby, both my sheepe be in more safety, and I my selfe take my rest more quietly. DE. Why are you so carefull ouer this your charge ? SH. Because I haue a kinde and bountifull Master, who hath promised me a great rewarde, although I doe it not in regarde of rewarde, but rather for the loue I beare to him.

## CHAPTER. 3.

*Of the same Argument.*

DESIRE now grewe into great admiration with him selfe, and was greatly pleased, hearing that this sheeheard did vndertake this charge for loue, and said to him. My brother, considering you cōuerse for the most part in these pleasant fieldes, can you certifie me of a certayne Knight which wandereth solitarily, vp and downe alone ? by reason that being expelled his possession by his owne subjectes, he is constraigned to seeke some place of abode where he may rest and settle him selfe. SH. What is the name of this Knight, you enquire after ? DE. He is called, the *Lone of God*. SH. I knowe right well the place of his abode. And if thou hadst experience to keepe my flocke as I haue, and werthe euery way sufficient for such a charge, I would my selfe bring thee to him, that thou mightest not as heretofore wan-

der vp and downe to seeke him, hee loueth sheeheardes, and willingly conuerseth with them. And although he be a noble, and renowned knight, yet is he notwithstanding the sounne of a sheeheard. But perceauing thee, to be a man of a weake, and tender constitution, and vnfitte of thy selfe, to vndertake the charge of my flocke, not able to follow them, through this solitarie desert, I thinke it meete, thou shouldest assay an other journey. D E. What other journey doe you aduise me to take? S H. First must you passe through this solitarie desert, and not farre hence, shall you finde a faire and stately Monasterie: this Monasterie is inhabited only with Virgins, of whome you shal learne the abode of this Knight: for such is the curtesie, affabilitie, and honest carriage of him, that willingly, he conuerseth with all, that seeke after him. This discourse of the sheeheard, pleased *Desire* not a little, and the rather, being put in hope, by him to finde out the *Loue of God*. Who said to him, teach me, I pray you the ready way that I must take: least that perhaps through ignorance, I happe to goe awry. S H. I may not my selfe forsake my flocke, yet will I appoint thee a conuenient companion in this thy journey, who accompaning thee, that by the assistance of God, thou shalt not easely goe out of thy way: take here with thee this my dogge.

dogge. DE. What is his name? SH. Good  
will. DE. Farewell my Brother. SH. And  
you also, to whome I wish a prosperous jour-  
ney.

## CHAPTER. 4.

*Of the house of Humilitie.*

**H**ere *Desire* leauing the Sheepheard, vn-  
dertoke his journey, accompanied with his  
dogge; running by his side: which was no little  
comfort to him on the way, and now hauing  
trauailed, many dayes, and nights, he entred on  
a Sondag, into a most pleasant greene medow,  
seated in a dry, and rocky soyle, whereat, *De-  
sire* meruailed not a little, to see so pleasant, and  
so greene a meddow, lying in so stony, and so  
barraine a place, ouergrowne aboute, with  
bushes, and thornes. And entring farther in,  
he found there builde, a stately, faire Monaste-  
rie: the sight whereof, pleased him much. But  
comming neare, he found the gates shut, and a  
certayne Virgin standing without, modest as to  
him seemed, both in her attire, and behauiour:  
who at the sight of *Desires* dogge, beganne  
to be afayd. Whome *Desire* comforted, and  
bidde not to feare, assuring her, his dogge  
would not hurte her. And meruailing, to  
see her stand thus alone without, he deman-  
ded of her, why shee stode there, who an-  
swared him, that shee expected the opening  
of

of the gates to goe in. Then demanding farther her name of her, she answered, saying; I am called *Vaine-glorie*. Now *Desire* having long expected the opening of the gates, and perceiving his attendance to be all in vaine, beganne to call, and knocke at the gate with a hammer, hanging thereat, called *Longanimitie*, & presently came forth an auncient reuerende man, who opened the gate. This man was called the *Feare of God*, who was both porter and keeper of all this Monasterie, whome *Desire* seing, and finding a graue and wise reuerende man, was greatly cheared in beholding him, and after due reuerence done to him, spake to him in manner following. Good Sir (quoth he,) my comming hither, is to seeke out a Knight, called the *Loue of God*. Who as I am tolde, is trauiled through this desert, and hath his abode now in this Monastery, wherefore I humbly desire of you, to know if he be here within or no. At this demand of his, the porter rejoyced, for he loued the *Loue of God* euen as his owne Brother, & asked of him, why he sought after this Knight. DE. I seeke him not only because I am greatly delighted with him, but also because it is very behouefull for me to finde him; FEARE OF GOD. What? haue you any thing so secret that you dare not reueale it? DE. Truely Sir. only I desire his

com-

company and conuerſation, and wiſh I were his ſeruant to attend on him, coueting nothing more than ſuch a Maſter and inſtructor, for in all this country, I cannot finde a Maſter anſwerable to my minde, although many haue bin willing to entertayne me. But I haue learned from many, that the *Loue of god*, is a moſt noble gentle, and bountifull Maſter: who in that he is rich, often beſtoweth great preferments on his ſeruants. FEARE OF GOD. True it is, he paſſed, his way accompanied but with fewe, who at this preſent is not within, but haue patience a while, & I will call a Virgin to you, who is able to direct you, where you ſhall finde him out.

## CHAPTER. 5.

*How Vaine-glory watcheth at the gate.*

**M**Eane time, now *Deſire* joyfully expected the comming of the Porter, and Virgin he ſpake of, & not weighting long, there came to him a modeſt and ſeemely Virgin, who ſaluting him curteouſly, was in like manner reſaluted againe, of whome *Deſire* craued her name, who answered, my name is called *Nihil-penſio*, becauſe I entermedle not in ſuperfluous & vnneceſſary thinges, and demanding farther the name of the Monaſterie, ſhee told him it was the houſe of *Humilitie*, becauſe within, there dwelt many virgins, who liued vnder the obedience and rule of humilitie, he againe asked:  
what

what maide is that which standeth without the gate, her name quoth she, is called *Vaine-glory*: who sitteth continually at this gate vntill it be opened, and then, if the Porter be negligent, & looke not strictly to his office, (but leaue open the gates) shee presently entreth. Why do you not admt her in said *Desire*, considering both in speech, habit, & gesture, she seemeth modest, vertuous, & honest. You know not (quoth the *Virgin*) her conditions, I perceau: For I assure you, shee is a most dangerous beaste, for how much the more modest, & religious she semeth by her externall carriage, so much I holde her, to be more dangerous. What, saith *Desire*, doth she at any time hurt you? yea truly said the *Virgin*, so farre as lieth in her power: her father is a wicked man, called *Selfe Love*, her mother as ill, called *Selfe Estimation*, neither haue we three greater enemies in all the world, and farther, they are enemies to the *Love of God*, a Knight who is Master of this Monastery, in which we liue. And that you may farther know, what hurt *Vaine-glory* doeth vs: I say, so soone as shee entereth in, shee is so gluttonous, and rauening, that first shee goeth into our Orchards, & there deuonreth, and eateth vp al our fruite, which is both faire & good, which is the fruite, wee haue to liue with, neyther haue we more than one tree of it, which carrieth so litle, that  
hardly

hardly are we susteyned therewith, which being taken away from vs, by *Vaine-glory*, we remaine so poore, that nothing is left vs. And yet worse than this, after shee is once come in, shee is so crafty, and deceitfull, that we cannot expell her, labour we neuer so much, vntill wee call the assistance of our Mother, at whose only sight, shee runneth away: wherefore wee thinke it good, not to admitte her at all, which to preuent, wee purposely keepe this Porter continually at our gate, who is a seuerer and sterne man, and still shutteth the gate, that shee cannot enter: whome wee intreate to be circumspect, that when hee admitteth any, hee through negligence, leaue not open the gate. *Desire* stooke amased, at the discourse of this *Virgin*, and replied, considering shee is so dangerous an enemy to you, you cannot be too carefull, to keepe her out of your house.

## CHAPTER. 6.

*By what meanes, we may attaine to Humilitie.*

**D***Esire* continuing his speech with this *Virgin*, asked her who brought her into that goodly, and Religious Monastery, adorned, and shining, with so rare vertues, Two *Virgins* (quoth shee) guided me hither, whereof

whereof the one is called *Contempt of the world*, a Virgin endued with singuler vertues the other called *Contempt of her selfe*, exceeding the first by many degrees. These two Virgins leading me in, entreated our Mother and Mistris to receaue me, which notwithstanding she had not done, but for the loue of a certayne Knight, which mette vs in our journey, & came in here with vs, who bestowed on me this habite I weare, and admitted me into the society of his Virgins, and had it not beene graunted vs by speciall grace, that, that Knight had entred in hither with vs, I had neuer beene receaued, but had lost my labour. D E. What is the name of the Knight you speake of? V I R G I N : The *Loue of God*. It pleased *desire* much, that the *Loue of God* was of that account, that so many, and so great thinges where done: only for his sake, and now he beganne more earnestly to Desire his presence, and sayde. D E. Deare sister, tell me what were the parents of these two Virgins, which brought you hither, for it auaileth much to the honesty and reputation of a man, to be borne of honest and vertuous parents, for commonly the tree taketh the vertue from the roote. V I R. I knowe right well their parents names, their father is one of chiefest authoritie in our Princes palace, who is called, *To knowe*, also I knowe as well their grand-father, whose  
name

name is *To Consider*, who is a wise and discrete man, and one that dischargeth his office duly : he married a wife called *Wisedom*. D E. Had the Knight when hee mette you no man in his company ? V I R. Yes, he had a boy with him whom he loueth dearely, this boy is, called the *Lone of our neighbour*. D E. Can you direct me whither this Knight is gone ? V I R. I coulde direct you, but let vs goe in, and I will bring you to those that can instruct you certainly : but tell me I pray you, why doe you carry this great dogge with you ? D E. He was giuen vnto me by another, for I my selfe had first but a little whelp, which I bredde vp in my chamber, vntil I mette a certayne shepheard that bestowed, his bigger dogge on me, to accompany me through this vast and solitarie desert, in which (as I was told) liued many hurtful serpents, & dangerous wild beasts, from which I might bee defended by the assistance of this dogge. V I R G. What is the dogges name ? D E. *Goodwill*. V I R G. The dogge surely is a very good dogge, if you knowe howe to keepe him : and assure your selfe, so long as you haue him, he will suffer no ill to befall vnto you, neither neede you to feare, to stray out of your way. D E. But tell me I pray you ? of whome may I enquire, where I may finde this Knight that I seeke after ? V I R. Truly Brother, he dwelleth

dwellleth farre hence, & thou hast a long journey to goe through this desert, before thou canst come to the place of his abode: thou must trauaile at the leaste, seauen dayes journey, for there be seauen Monasteries, seated in this desert, neither is there any other way to passe, but this: yet for the loue of the *Loue of God*, considering, I see thee so desirous of him, I will direct thee a short way to goe, by the which thou shalt sooner come where he is, wherefore, it is requisite that thou follow my aduise. *Desire* hearing what shee saide, rejoyced greatly, but especially, because shee saide shee would doe it for the *Loue of God*, and saide to her. *DE.* I will doe, what ere you bid me, so I may finde the *Loue of God*. *VIR.* Here, within this desert, there are eight Monasteries, whereof, this which is the house of *Humility*, is the first, the second, is of *Iustice*, the third, is of *Wisdom*, the fourth, of *Fortitude*, the fift, of *Temperance*, the sixt, of *Faith*, the seauenth, of *Hope*, the eight, of *Charity*: in this last of *Charity*, remaineth the *Loue of God*, and there dischargeth the office of a porter. This whole journey, thou must vndertake, if thou wilt be sure to go the right way, but as I saide, I will teach thee a shorter way, by which, thou mayest sooner come to him: yet notwithstanding, it is of necessity, that thou abide a time here in this Monastery, that thou maist

maist learne, marke, and remember, all our orders, and be acquainted with our Mistris, & all her daughters, and learne, and remember their names. behauiours, & liues : Moreouer, thou must diligently note, al things in this Monastery, & carry to the *Loue of God*, Certaine rules of ours, for the great loue he beareth to this our Monastery before others, then will he without delay, most willingly receaue thee, the rather, if thou bring letters of commendation from our Mistris. D E. What is the reason, the *Loue of God* should so preferre you; considering (as me seemeth) you are the poorest, meanest, & fewest in number. V I R. This was the first Monastery that was founded in this Desert, and all the other are depēding on this, besides our chieft founder, & gouernor, the builder, & workman of this Monasterie, maketh his abode and dwelling amongst vs : And although he walke vp & downe this Desert, to visit & keep in order the other Monasteries, yet will he not permit himself to be otherwaies called, then a child of this Monastery, & first of al, we gaue him an habit. *desire* was so much delighted with the discourse of this virgin; that he felte his hart inflamed with loue, for he noted her words well, & saide, he desired nothing more, than to spend long time in this place, & with great diligence to note & marke their orders. Then the virgin

taking him by the hand said, let vs now goe in.

CHAPTER. 7.

*The purpose, or intent of Humilny, and  
her talke with Desire.*

**T**He building of this house much pleased  
Desire, and he admired the beauty thereof,  
considering it was playne, without any cōter-  
fet: for neither was it builde high, not yet set  
forth, with any imagery or painting; but lowe,  
& conuenient, not founded vpon sand, but on a  
firme rocke. After Desire had a time attended his  
deuotions in the Oratory, the Virgin brought  
him to the chamber of their Mistris, or mother,  
who receaued him curteously, seeing him ver-  
tuous, & deuoted to Gods seruice, and making  
him sit, said vnto him, what cause my Son hath  
brought thee, amongst vs, considering we are  
so poore, so meane, & such abjects? DE. Lady  
mother, I seeke after a knight, called the *Loue of  
God*. And as I am instructed, I canot finde him,  
except I make my abode here some time with  
you: wherfore (if it be not troublesome to you,)  
I desire to liue vnder your obedience, & gouer-  
ment. H V M. Your desire and purpose plea-  
seth me well, but first consider, and weigh with  
your selfe, what it is that you goe about to vn-  
dertake, least hauing once entred, you repent  
you of your purpose. DE. I beseech God assist  
me with his grace & helpe, that I may perseuer  
in

in vertue, and all goodnes. HVM. I wish the same, & pray to God, to accomplisn this good worke, which he hath begonne in thee. But farther, it is requisite, that thou thy selfe endeavour al that in thee lyeth, that God may prosper this thy good purpose. DE. What think you needful for me to do? HVM. My Sonne, I will tell thee. If thy desire be to remayne here amongst vs, and not to be expelled from hence by my Virgins; thou must take my yongest daughter, which brought thee in hither, who is called *Nibili-pensio*, that is, contempt of al vnneccessary cares: & her thou must obey as thy gouernesse or Mistris, to whome, purposely we haue committed the charge, to entertayne strangers, and be the directrix of nouices, & whosoever refuse to be obediēt to her, neuer perseuer in that they vndertake. DE. Most willingly I admit her, and receaue her my gouernesse; and desire to know of you Lady mother, your name, stocke, conditions, and degree, & how, you come to be mother ouer these *Virgins*: For as it is tould me, I must knowe, and learne, the properties, conditions, & state, of all these Virgins vnder your gouernment to the intent, that the better I know them, the more I may loue them; & that when I shall depart from hēce, I may the better be able to answere, & direct those that shal aske, or seek to learne any thing of me. HVM. My name is

*Humility*, my Father, *Contempr* of him selfe,  
*Knowledge of him selfe*, my Grandfather, and his  
 wife is called *Knowledge of God*. My fore na-  
 med Grandfather, commeth from a citty, cal-  
 led *To marke*, and consider what I am, what I  
 haue beene, what I shall be. My Grandmother  
 from a towne, called *Consideration of the Lowe of*  
*God*. There are but two wayes, to goe to the  
 country of my Grandfather, & only two gates,  
 whereby to enter in, the first is, *Man him selfe*,  
 the other *All creatures*, and men say, no man  
 can enter into either of these gates, but by fly-  
 ing: and that our Lord God him selfe builded  
 this citty, with his owne hands, considering, that  
 none but he, could finishe so commodious, so  
 beautifull, & so firme a building. DE. Would  
 our Lord God, whose majesty, and excellency  
 is so great, put him selfe to the building, of such  
 stony, and clay workes? HVM. Yea truely,  
 for he is an excellent workeman, and both a  
 stilfull mason, and carpenter, and taketh great  
 delight in making earthen works, & buildings.  
 DE. What is the cause that he doth this, con-  
 sidering that he hath need of nothing? HVM.  
 Nothing, but his owne goodnes, doth con-  
 strayne, or moue him to do this: whence it pro-  
 ceedeth, that he neuer ceaseth to benefit others,  
 neither seeketh he, or studieth with all thinges  
 that he maketh, and goeth about, anie other  
 thing,

thing, but the benefit, felicity, and saluation, of all men, the honor and prayse, to himselfe alone reserued. And for this cause, doth he make of so base, and vile a matter, so goodly, and bea-  
 full workes, as he doeth, that the worthines of the worke, being compared with the basenes of the matter, all men might admire him, prayse him, and loue him. D E. I meruaile that so excellēt a Lord as he is, would seeke for prayse, considering thereby he may be touched with vaine-glory? H V M. There is nothing lesse to be feared, than that in him, he being so per-  
 fit, that no greater perfection can be added to him, and all honor and glory, that can be yeel-  
 ded to him, cannot be said vaine, being only proper to him; And how great honor soeuer we can giue to him, yet in regarde of that which becometh him, & is due to him; we can neuer honor him, answerable to his dignitie. And for that cause will he be exalted, and praysed, not that he desireth glory, but because he is most iust, and will, that euery one, haue that which is due to him: then seing all prayse, honor, and glory is due to him alone, being only good, his will is, that all prayse, honor and glory, be yeel-  
 ded only to him. But if anie other shall seeke or desire after glory, they may iustly be called vaine-glorious, because they take it from him, to whome it only appertayneth, and he may

truly be called a theefe, that taketh to himfelfe, an other mans goodes, againſt the will of the true owner.

## CHAPTER. 8.

*Humility continueth her ſpeech.*

**D**ESIRE. Now Lady Mother, that you haue tolde me your parentage, & ſtocke, I deſire to knowe, how you came to be chiefe Gouverneſſe of this houſe : for in my opinion, it is a greate honour and dignity, and I my ſelfe, in time may come to be a gouernour : for there is greate difference, betweene commanding, and obeyinge, *Humility* hearing what he ſaide, beganne to weepe, of whome, *Deſire* demaunded the cauſe of her weeping. **HVM.** My Sonne, I cannot conteyne my teares, to ſee, that outwardly thou ſeemeſt clad with the habit of humilitie, and yet inwardly thou appeareſt naked, & bare, & that in ſhew, thou ſemeſt religious and virtuous ; but in hart, and minde, voyde of virtue, and deuotion. In vaine haue we vſed our paſſed diſcourſe, ſeing theſe thoughtes, and deſires of thine, are ſo cleane repugnant from the wil of my father, & moſt dearly beloued Lord Ieſus, who neither in word, nor deed, euer ſought, or deſired rule or gouernment, & came not into this world, to be ſerued, but to ſerue. From which path who ſocuer turneth, and ſtrayeth : walketh the way  
of

of damnation, not saluation. But Oh vnhappy & miserable creaturs that we are, to whom it is allotted, to rule and gouerne others: considering how hard a taske we take in hand, if we wil but commaund our selues as we ought. Such honor is in deede but misery, and full of cares, labors, wearines, afflictions, sorowes, dangers, & most horrible feares: and which if it be not well ordered & gouerned, is in the end accompanied with ignominy and shame. Oh ouer heauie burthen of rule & cōmandement: in which nothing is found, put labor, and trouble, wherein hatred, repining, & il wil is receiued from those that should acknowledg, and yeeld obedience and thanks. If thou remainest any time here amongst vs, thou shalt finde by experience my sayings true. Now, to answere thy demaund, how I came to be gouernesse: I will, for the *Loue of God* acquaynte thee with the meane. When first, I entered into this house: I purposed and so perswaded my selfe, that I was but a labouring beast, and the seruant of the other Virgins: and this determination of mine, I so resolu'd to performe, and imprinted it, deeply in my minde, and hart, continuallie calling it freshly to my minde, and prayinge to God, to make mee still desire it, and that it woulde please him to make mee worthie to bee his Spouse, and so through his appoynte-ment

I came to be gouernesse, although of my selfe, Ineither would, or desired it. *Desire* hearing *Humilities* discourse, thought her a Virgin, of very rare vertue, in that for the *Loue of God*, shee had so dejected, and debased her selfe; and perceauing her to be yet a Virgin, vnderstood the Matrimony that shee spake of, to be spirituall, and not carnall, and said. DE. Then I perceauē, who so will be a Superiour, & ruler, must according as you haue done, first humble and debase himselfe. HVM. It is true my Son as by experience thou mayest finde it. DE. And how may I try it? HV. By seeing those that humble themselves to be exalted: yet, to take heede, that thou humble not thy selfe to that end, that thereby thou desire to be exalted, for so, thou shalt sinne in pride: And pride, & humility are open enemies, and euer oppose themselves, one against the other. For what so euer thou doest, if thou truly humble thy selfe, thou canst not, in the same action, exalte thy selfe. But if thou humble thy selfe, because thou wouldest be exalted, thy shewe, is humble, but thy acte, is proud. And because, the action is to be taken, according to the intent of the mind, such humility is called pride. By which reason, humilitie, may diuersly be termed pride. For if wee haue respect to the action of such a man outwardly, he carrieth a shew of humility, but

looking to the end of his humble action, wee shall finde it, wholly to proceed from pride. And to speake properly, humility it selfe, contendeth not with pride, but the spirit of humility, and it is impossible, to haue these two agree in one : for humility is but an act, but the spirit of humility, conteyneth both the act, and the cause, and intention, of humbling, and dejecting our selues.

## CHAPTER. 9.

*Humility continueth her discourse, and teacheth how to strine against vice.*

**N**OW my forenamed husbād, (I meane my purpose I vndertooke to humble my selfe, like a labouring beast, and the seruant of all men,) assisted me faithfully, in a certayne conflict I had with an other Lady, and her maidens, of the house of *Pride*, whose gouernesse was called *Pride of life* : which daily endeoureth to scrach out mine eyes, and still brauleth with me : And she bringeth with her, both the vnder gouernesse of her house, called *Concupiscence of the flesh* ; and her steward, *Concupiscence of the eyes*. To these three associates, her selfe a lewde maide, both mother, and nurse of them, called *Negligence*, who beinge often weake, and feeble, is easily ouercome : but sometime she so filleth her selfe, with eating, & drinking, that shee becommeth fatte & strong,  
and

and then is shee very dangerous. Shee hath attending on her, a certayne maide, dull, foolish, and ill brought vp, called *Malice*: with whome come hither, three other Maides, *Anger, Sloath, & Enuy*. And vnto the three last, associate them selues, two other, that is, *Naughty Suspicion, and Rash Iudgement*. All these, are at mortall enmity with me, and still oppose them selues against me, with whome I am daily, to contende, and fight. Therefore, so oft as they enter in here, I with the assistance of my husband, strait driue them out, and force them to flie. And then haue we an other feare, least the Maide which continually watcheth at the gates, I meane *Vaine-glory*, presently steppe in. For if once, we giue her opportunity to enter, she robbeth vs of the fruite, and benefit which we got, by expelling our other forenamed enemyes: so that then we are barraine of all goodnes, and loose the labour we tooke in our former conflicte. D E. How then chanceth it, that when these other your enemies enter in here, she standing at the gates, doth not also enter. H V M. This is the reason, those other Maydens, vse the benefit of winges, & enter not by the gate, but flie ouer the walles, & often they hide them selues, so secretly in some corner of the house, that when we least suspect them, they walke & wander vp and downe amongst vs, wherefore

we

we are of necessity, to keepe a carefull watch, least suddainly they come vpon vs, and spoile vs vnlooked for. DE. Let vs discourse, yet longer of this matter, and tel me why? You are at such debate, & contention with them, considering how il a thing it is, to giue such example to worldly mē, when they shal see such discord, & dissention amongst Religious persons; who they knowe, should be gentle, pittiful, & milde, for the Loue of God to all men? HVM. The cause of our strife, and dissension with them, is al only for that cause, we expel them our house, because they are open and professed enemies, to the *Loue of God*, who is our chiefe Lord & Master, and whosoever is an enemy to the *Loue of God*, we wil haue neither friendshippe, or familiarity by any meanes with him.

## CHAPTER. 10.

*Of Concupiscence of the flesh.*

DESIRE was greatly pleased to heare, how great confidence *Humility* had, in the *Loue of God*, and desired of her, to instruct him, by what meanes and helps they ouercame, and expelled: those dangerous Maydens, their professed enemies. HVM. I would willingly doe it, but because I am not yet fully acquainted with thy nature, life, conditions and minde, but only goe vpon conjectures and imaginations; I rest yet doubtfull, whither

whither I may instruct thee herein or no. For considering the contrariety, and difference of mens natures, the sweetest hony, tasteth not sweet to all men. D E. What soeuer I seeme in shewe to your iudgement: or what opinion soeuer you haue of me: yet I wholly submit my selfe to your will, and yeelde me to be ordered by your direction, only desiring to be instructed by you, what meanes to vse, to finde the *Loue of God*. H V M. Vpon that condition I will satisfie your desire, and will impart and make knowne to you my exercises, and course of life. First that holy purpose, and determination of myne, which I spake of before, hath made me Mistris of the whole world, so long as I shall contemne, and despise it. And Mistris ouer my owne body by fasting, and discipline, and by my voluntary and willing humility? I say, not only Mistris and commandresse ouer my ghostly enemy, but ouer all the world and yet farther which is greatest Mistris and commandresse ouer my selfe, for when the world seeth me to labour, and endeuour, with all my diligence to please the *Loue of God*, it repugneth me and all my family, yet I still reteyne, peace and tranquillity with my forenamed husband. Now *Desire*, greatly admired the vertue and force of him, whome *Humility* so often had named her husband,

band, and said. D E. Ibeseech you Lady Mother, instruct mee by similitudes that I may more playnely conceaue your meaning. For I am but of dull and slowe concepte, and by examples I shall better conceaue your sayings. This request of *Desire* pleased *Humility* well, finding that by acknowledging this owne dullnesse, he was now become both modest and humble, wherevpon she saide to him. H V M. So soone as I see, any of my before named enemies enter in hither, I thus behaue my selfe, if it be the first which is *Concupiscence of the flesh*. I foreknowe already her conditions, and behauiours, which are to be exceedingly giuen to gluttony, and to pamper her body by excesse of eating & drinking. Therefore first I take from her all kinde of delicate diet, neither do I allowe her, her fill of ordinary meate and drinke; And because I am not strong enough of my selfe, to tame and master her, in regarde that my domesticall seruants assist her, I vse others helpe, and place on my right hand. *Gods grace*, which may strengthen and defende me from this dangerous enemy. I also craue the ayde and assistance of my husband, and then say to her. Sister, I haue my selfe despised my flesh, and make no better accompte of my selfe than of a labouring beast, and beasts seeke not after dainty and delicate fare, but only that, as  
may

may be sufficient to sustayne nature, and are content with that, which is allowed them, by the discretion of their Master. And if the Master finde him to be wanton and deuouring, he musleth him, that he neuer eateth, but when & what in his discretion he shall like of. And so Sister, in this respect I am content to be vsed and ruled like a beast, besides the *Loue of God*, hath giuen me a bridell, which is made of Sobriety, that I cannot eate but at wonted times, and that I desire not, or looke to haue any other meate, or more daintely dressed then such as ordinarie is set before me, and therewith I satisfie and content my selfe. Farther the *Loue of God* hath enioyned me to this also, if I will serue and please him as I ought, to eate temperately, and moderately, and only for necessary sustenance, of that, what soeuer it be that is set before me: & that for good manners I alwayes leaue some what in the dish, thereby to shewe that more is allowed me, then I can well eate. For when all is eaten that is sett before vs, it is as much as if you shoud say, my allowance is not sufficient for mee, neither am I content therewith, therefore I desire to haue more set on the table. And yet farther this rule is giuen mee to obserue for the *Loue of God*. That I would and should desire lesse to bee allowed mee, and the same worse dressed, then the allow-

allowance of my Sisters : and alwaies to wish something to be wanting about me, & therein to rejoyce for the *Love of God*. By these & like meanes, this malepert wanton maide is overcome, and driuen away from molesting me. But when againe shee shall prouoke and sturre me, to wanton pleasure, not only by my owne flesh, but also by others. I then fly from her, as fast as I can secluding my selfe frō al such company, as may allure or entice me to pleasure or concupiscence. And against this assault, I find that to seclude my selfe from cōpany, is a present remedy and most soueraigne preseruatiue. Neither, doth this enemy assault me only in my body, but in my soule also, by suggesting many ill thoughts. Against which also I vse, the remedy of flight and hide my selfe, either in some corner of a rocke, or els in some vn-frequented and solitary place, and there settle all my thoughts and cogitations, vpon my most sweete Sauour I E S V S, calling to minde his most holy life, his passion, torments, and most bitter death. Also meditating vpon the cruell torments of Hell, the seuer and iust Iudgement of Almighty GOD. My owne departure from this miserable world, and that of necessity I must appeere before the Iudgement seate of God : there to giue accompt of al my thoughts, wordes, and deedes. By these and  
like

like means, I ouercome, and put to flight, this forenamed maiden, who is the Lieutenan<sup>t</sup> of the castle of *Pride*.

## CHAPTER II.

*Of the concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life.*

**Y**Et farther, to ouercome and cleane subdue this enemy, it is also requisite to vanquish and conquer her companion, I meane *Cöcupiscence of the eyes*, the steward or gouernour of the house of *Pride*: who alwaies giueth winges to *Concupiscence of the flesh*. For continually shee minstreth occasion to her companion, who not-withstanding, I ouercome with my holy purpose. For so soone as shee commeth, I say thus to her. Sister, I am no better then a labouring beast, who neuer desireth superfluities, or more then is allowed him, but alwaies is contented with so much as is necessary, neither expecteth curiosity in that which is to be had of necessity, litle regarding whether his saddell and bridle be guilded or imbrodered, or whether the stable be curiously adorned, but content if conueniently he may stand & lie. Considering then, that for the *Loue of God*, I account my selfe no better then a beast: I will also vse my body as if it were a beast. And as the breaker, and rider, of a stiffe necked horse, with the raines of a bridle, enforceth him to stoppe & turne: so the *Loue of God*, hath bridled

deled and tide me, with the bridell and chayne  
of *Shamefastnes* and *Bashfulness*: that I shall not  
curiously see, & couet the vanities of the world.  
For I ought not behold: that I ought not de-  
fire. And the *Loue of God* hath taught me to  
say, when I see a thing beautiful, pleasing, rare,  
singuler, or curious, I neuer will settle my loue  
on thee, but refuse thee, and hold thee but as a  
meere vanity, therefore remembring the wor-  
thines of my creation, I will not bestowe my  
loue or fix, my affection, on so vile, so base, &  
so transitory a thing: but on that which in it  
selfe is the only treasure, and goodnes, and a  
beauty which neither age or sickenes can ble-  
nish, I meane on my sweete Sauour and Re-  
deemer I E S V S; who demandeth of me my  
loue and affection, and may iustly chalenge the  
same as his owne. By these and like meanes this  
other Maide is ouercome. Now these two be-  
ing vanquished in manner as I haue told you,  
there yet remayneth the last which is Mistris of  
these, one more terrible, crafty and more suttle  
than the other, euer lying in wayte to hinder  
good actions, her name is called *Pride of Life*,  
who when soeuer shee commeth in hither a-  
mongst vs, is alwayes attended with one or o-  
ther hand-maide, and still bringeth with her ei-  
ther *Good or excell estimation*. But straight I say  
so her, a beast is no better to be accompted of

than a beast, neither is to be thought, worthy of honour, or estimation, but rather ignominy, and base contempt. Then sometime she commeth complayning to me, and saith: see how my superiours behaue themselves towardes me, and vse me, both in age, witte, and judgment: I am not their inferiours, yet they vse such and such a one, with better respect then me. But presently I finde out her craft and subtelty, and preuenting her, reply: A beast is not to be vfed but basely, and according to his Masters discretion, to be whipped and beaten. For if at any time his Master shall vse him but gently, and play with him; he presently will kicke, and forgette the duty due to him. Therefore a wise Master, and men of good gouernment, although they loue their beastes neuer so well: yet will neuer vse extraordinary, and vndue familiarity to them: but alwayes carry themselves with a kinde of seuerer grauity; considering such familiarity is neuer attributed to humility, curtesie, loue, or affability, but rather to simplicity, and meere fondnesse. For such familiarity, doth rather hurt, then benefite a beast. But a discrete, and wise Master, will rather endeouour with all possible diligence, that his beast, or horse, keepe his right way in their journey, and carry carefully, the burthen laide on their backs, then that the world

world shoulde thinke him fonde of them, or expect to be helde a kinde, and louing Master, and one that shoulde seeke to be prayesd of them. For by these meanes it might happen, as oft we see it, that either the Master towards the beast, or the beast forgette himselfe towards the Master, when the Master vseth not such reason, moderation, and discretion, as he ought: and that indiscretion may giue occasion to the beast, to stray out of their boundes, farther then is allowed, and so by little and little, vsing an ill custome, the Master shall not dare to direct, or gouerne according to the superiority he hath ouer his beast; but if hee chaunce for their negligence to strike or beate them, they presently will resist, and kicke againe at him. And then if the beast happen either to cast off his burthen, or else to carry it contrary to his Masters minde, he must needes winke at it, and suffer him to goe, where, and as hee will himselfe, and so, he to be obedient to the beast, not the beast to him. Euen so Sister, were it like to prooue vvith mee, if I should yeelde to my owne sensuall affections, and be carried away with worldlie pleasures, and vanities. But hee that loueth me, and hath care ouer me, doth with his discretion correct me, and bridle my vvill; that I fall not to open shame, and so bee vndone, but

for the loue he carrieth to my soule, he doth chastice & discipline my body at his discretion. Neither doe I my selfe wish to be vsed better then a beast. At some other time the same *Pride of life*, cometh to me vnder the colour of *Envy*, and complaineth thus. See how such and such an office is giuen to this, and that body: But no reckening or accompt is made of me. One is made gouernesse, and an other vndergouernesse, the third the stewart, and an other secretary; but my selfe, which am inferiour to none of them in yeares, or desert, am neglected and nothing regarded at all. No place of credit is committed to me, wherein I might rule or command ouer others: but alwayes I am dejected like a base kitchen Wench: Yea, I am made the vnderling of the meanest mayde in the house. And now I finde it true that they of best desert; are commonly and for the most part least considered. For which cause hence forth, I will deserue lesse: for I see, they that counterfette to be lambs are deuored of Wolues. Such and like complaints, doth shee oft make to me, as though I knew not the grounde from whence it came. To whome I answere; Sister, I haue not giuen ouer and forsaken the world, and betaken my selfe to this solitary, and sequestred life; thereby to rule others, and to moderate their causes. For since my first entrace heather,

I haue vowed obedience : and therefore will performe that which I came hither to doe, and for which I was called, and which I vndertoke to accomplish at my entrance. For God will neuer demande or aske accompte of me, how much I haue commanded and ruled others, or with how much honor, or how great offices I haue bin exalted in the world : but how humbly, and dutifully, I haue obeyed his commandements, and how willingly I haue humbled my selfe to my superiours, and subjected & debased my owne wilful & stubborne rude mind. Therefore Sister, I looke only to discharge and performe my owne office, in that place and degree, to which I am called by God, and suffer others to looke likewayes to that charge of theirs, to which by Gods providence they are as my selfe called. Meane time this one thing I knowe for certayne, that I liue in the state of assured saluation. (That is vnder true obediēce, humility, and subjection;) from which no man can fall, except he first clyme higher. And so hereof I haue no iust cause to complayne, but rather to rejoyce, prayse, & yeele daily thanks to Almighty God, in that he hath debarred, and as it weare taken from me, the meanes and occasion of falling into the great perils and dangers; into which high offices and places of dignity and preferment : are wonte to drawe, and

throwe headlong men that seeke not after perfection. Which is truly verified by this saying of Saint **AVGVSTINE**. *I neuer founde Gods ire & indignation more against me : then that it pleased him to appoint me a commander ouer others.* which truly *Desire* ought not seeme strange to thee. For as this wicked Wench, which beareth such sway in the house of *Pride*, is more prone to wickednes, then all her fellowes : so must we (if throughly we will subdue her) vse greater pollicy, strength, and exercise of vertue. And to the end I protract not the time with circumstances, I now will deliuer no vaine discourse to thee, but will instruct thee, by what meanes and groundes, thou shalt be able: to ouercome and put to flight, this crue of wicked Maydens. When any of these which so euer shee be shall come: and seeme to complaine as I haue declared before: be thou ruled by me and follow my example; As if *Concupiscence of the flesh* shall come & say, I am allowed both to little meate, and yet that is cold, and not cleanly dressed: my wyne is sowre, & euery thing in our house is sluttishly ordered, answere her but thus, she that hath more then she deserueth, hath no cause to complaine: But thou deseruest not browne bread, & cold water, which most holy & Religious men haue beene contented to liue with. Therefore thou, which art so wicked, so  
sloath-

sloathfull, so disdainfull, & redy to complaine,  
 voide of all deuotion, inconstant, enuious and  
 vnthankfull to God : doest not deserue the  
 coursest bread and water. Which being true, &  
 yet hauing good bread, wyne, and other meate.  
 Why shouldest thou complaine and hast more  
 then thy desert ? answer her a like if she finde  
 false with her apparell . The like reply make  
 also to *Concupiscence of the eyes*, if she seeke after  
 or wish for this thing or that, & say, O wretch  
 that thou art, who by thy owne desert, art not  
 worthy to enjoy the least good that is. Yet hast  
 thou the vse, of many deuout and vertuous  
 books, by reading of which if thou wouldest,  
 thou mightest become good . And although  
 (neuertheles) one were sufficient for thee. Yet  
 hast thou holy books of prayers and meditati-  
 ons . Tell me what is it thou desirest more? truly  
 vnder a shewe of desiring things of necessity :  
 thou longest after and seekest for thinges of su-  
 perfluity, then the which nothing can be more  
 opposite to the vowe of *Pouertie* . And al-  
 though thereby thy merit be not clearly lost :  
 Yet assure thy selfe, it is much impaired . And  
 nothing can more dishonor & shame him, that  
 professeth in pouerty to imitate our Sauour,  
 then to haue lesse vertue and tast of Religion,  
 then the Heathens who professed the worship  
 of false gods. Amongst whome *Seneca* shewed

him selfe a worthy Captayne and teacher of *Powerty*, as we may finde if we reade what is written of him. The same answere giue I to the third, that is, *Pride of life*, when shee commeth to me, with a desire to be honored, loued, accōpled of, exalted or preferred to some office. For then say I to her. Thou wretched Wench, thou hast more honor alredy then thou deseruest: what hast thou not through the number of thy sinnes deserued, to be throwen headlong downe, into the bottomlesse pit of hell: there to be partaker of the paynes of the damned, and yet behold, how much thou art honored of God, who not only doth tollerate thee, to liue amongst his creatures, but hath admitted thee, also into his house and family; and willingly would haue thee, not only his seruant, but also if thou wouldest one of his daughters. And although thy owne vnworthinesse be such, that thou deseruest not to be reckened amongst his inferiour seruants; yet hath he admitted thee into his priuate chamber: and willingly would haue thy presence, both night & day, that thou mightest freely talke with him, prayse him, honour him, and serue him; and that yet living here in this mortall life, thou maist be honored with the office of Angels, be chosen as one of his most speciall Friends, sit at his owne table, and feede on the foode him selfe feedeth. And

now

now proude Wench what is it thou wouldest more, whither wouldest thou, through thy pride clyme? wouldest thou ascend againe from whence thou once didest fall? that thou mightest be plunged as deepe in the bottomlesse pit of hell, as is *Lucifer* thy father, whose pride threw him thither, what wouldest thou desire? wouldest thou be God? Truly thou canst not say that thou wātest any thing, open thy blinde eyes, and willingly confesse, that thou hast receaued greater benefits from God: than thy base deserts, could any way challenge, content thy selfe with that, which it hath pleased God to bestowe on thee, and rest satisfied with that estate and degree; which God by his seruants hath allotted to thee, and assure thy selfe that all things haue their effect: according to the providence and permission of God.


## CHAPTER. 12.

*By what meanes the other forenamed naughty Maides may be overcome.*

**N**OW these three principall enemies being cleane overcome, *Negligence* their nurse is easely vanquished, who by a thousand secret corners stealeth in here amongst vs. Sometime at time of prayer: and sometimes againe when we should attend our works and labours. But still I answere her with this or like answere. Sister, a labouring beast, or a horse, is not kepte

in the stable, to be idle, liue easely, eate, drinke and sleepe: but still contentedly to labour, and take paynes. For except he be accustomed to labour, watch, and fast; he groweth rest and taketh stomacke, and will strike at his Master, who so sone as he perceaueth the ill conditions of his beast, presently will beate him, and kicke him with a spurre; Euē so the *Loue of God* doth giue me a spurre, I meane *Fear*, wherewith when I wax sloathfull he pricketh me. And I my selfe, who am but a seruant and a base vassall of this house, doe finde by prooffe, that the Maidens of this place must be made to labour, and that they must not be fauoured in that, which is commanded them, neither are to be suffered to liue idelly and wantonly, least they growe to haue willes and repugne their superiours. For no creature is worse then a proude and naughty seruant. Farther I demande whether shee thinke the Kingdome of heaven is to be obteyned, by eating, drinking, sleeping, and liuing idelly, which shee for shame cannot affirme. For our Sauour IESVS Christ walked a cleane contrary way. And if hee chose a different way, to come to perpetuall felicity, and would suffer his bitter passion, and that way enter into glory: we likewise if we desire to be partakers with him in glory, must also walke the path of patience, persecution,  
and

and pouerty . For so long as our head will goe one way , and our foote an other ; our whole body can neuer bee directed the true way . Therefore , except we walke the path of persecution, affliction, labour, and contempt ; we cannot thinke to be incorporated with him, but like corrupt members , must looke to be cut of, and throwen into hell fire : there to be consumed . For except we be partakers of our Sauours passion, and seeke him, and suffer with him on the ✝ Crosse : we must not expect to partake with him , any part of his glory, or of his resurrection . And to conclude except we be partakers in this life with our Sauiour I E S V S Christ , who was whipped, spit vpon, despised, wearied and toyled with daily labours , poore , continually suffering hunger and thirst , and at last enduring for our sinnes his bitter passion, and suffering like an offender his paynes on the ✝ Crosse ; when not withstanding hee was voide of all faulte , and of all innocents the most innocent that liued , except I say we imitate him herein : wee shall neuer finde him a sweete, gentle, and friendly King of glory, and Prince of peace . Sometime this naughty Wench, I still meane *Neglignce*, creepeth into our O-ratory, and there being weary, through lasines and sloath, is perplexed as if shee where cast  
into

into a prison. Then say I, Sister, true and perfect Religion, neuer complaineth of troublesome or wearynes. What can I giue againe to our Lord, for the many benefits he hath bestowed on me? What can I doe or suffer enough for my sweete Sauour and redeemer IESVS, who of this exceeding loue and voluntary will, continewed on the  Crosse, not sitting as I doe, but streatched thereon, not clothed, but naked and trembling with cold, not in a house as I am, but in the open cold ayer: not hauing shoofe on his feete to keepe them warme, but nayled to the Crosse, with great, boysterowes, and cold yron nayles; all which paynes & tormentes, he suffered for my sake. Why then should I shew my selfe so vngrate: that although not all: Yet I will not suffer some what againe for him? he suffered here for my sake, most exceeding miseries and painefull laboures, and those not for an houre a night or a day, but all his life which was 33. yeares: he hong a liue three houres vpon the Crosse, in exceeding paynes, most bitter torments, and vn sufferable griefes, such I say, whose like was neuer felte of man; & yet he a most louing Sauour esteemed them but small in regarde of his loue and kindnes towards me; and willingly would haue suffered yet greater than these, if necessity any wayes had vrged him to it. Considering then that  
he

he is a King, and I no better then a most base  
 bandslaue; he God, and I durte, dust, and cor-  
 ruption; he most holy and innocent, I a sinner  
 worthy of nought but punishment, then he ha-  
 uing suffered all this for mee: shall I grudge or  
 repine to suffer a little for him? What? is the  
 seruante to be regarded aboue the Master? No.  
 Away then *Negligence*. For I must be busied in  
 those things which are my fathers. Smale is  
 the merit we shall receaue here: if we be not  
 free from all wearinesse of the place. For cur-  
 sed is he that doeth the workes of God sloath-  
 fully and negligently. For God seeketh not  
 seruice that is done him by compulsion, neither  
 is he delighted with vnwilling sacrifices: but  
 with that which is done with a willing minde,  
 and proceedeth from a sincere & perfect hart.  
 Now this old accursed Wench, being put to  
 her flight, we must also banish her foolish hād-  
 maydes: who by how much the more they be  
 wicked and dangerous: by so much the more  
 are they vehemente and strong: and the lesse  
 we labour to mortifie and subdue them: the  
 harder shall we finde it to banish and expell  
 them. The first of them which is *Malice*, ac-  
 companied with her daughter *Anger*. I answered  
 in this manner, so sone as shee assaulteth me.  
 Sister, *Charity* is patient and gentle, then taking  
 the assistance of my husbände: *my Purpose*, I  
 sup-

suppresse her & say againe. Nothing can be inflicted to this beast so seueare, but that she hath deserued farre greater correction. If then I haue deserued greater punishments, I may justly say, I am fauourably spared, not being vsed in rigor according to my deserts. And it is the part of a gentle beast, not to behaue himself stubbournly or rudely to his master, & his whole family; but farre cōtrary to that, quietly, modestly, & gently to all men. For although perhaps to day his Master beate him : Yet to morrowe againe he will feede him wātonly, & wil behaue himselfe toward him, like a louing & kinde Master. And although perhaps outwardly he make no shewes of affection; Yet inwardly doubtles he esteemeth him highly; but yet dissembleth his affection, and loue, least hee take stomacke being pampered, and so kicke against his Master. Besides a beast doth sone forget: any wrong or iniury, & is pleased againe, if his master but stroke him on the head, or the necke. So I my selfe being iniured by any one of my Sisters, imagining I am a beast & a base vassall, beare it patiently for the *Loue of God*, and suffer them to vse me according to their pleasures, assuring my selfe, that I cannot endure so many iniuries from them; as my owne vnworthines doth daily deserue. And knowing farther, that our lord permitteth for the heynousnes of my sins : that I be  
af-

afflicted of them here in this life, so to learne to suffer afflictions for his sake. And now se this maide, who thou sayest doth wish me nothing, but hurt & offence, & that other who thou sayest doth secretly backbite me, & al these other, of whom I am so hated as thou sayest. These I say hate not or malice me: but my vices, faultes, defectes, my malice, my ill manners and conditions, & most of al my obstinate, & stubbourne will. Therefore I haue cause rather to thinke they loue me; for what herein they do, proceedeth from zeale and a most holy purpose, neither haue they any agreement with *Malice*, or thinke her meete to consort with *Vertue*. Let vs now therefore consider more iudicially. If I be, or would be thought the hādmaide of God. I must hate & detest (euen from my hart) al my sins, defectes, offences, & imperfections, & the pronesse of my fraylty, which draweth me to these, which being true, why should I malice or stomacke those, which doe but that which my selfe am bound to. To conclude. Know that these who thou sayest speake ill of me, and detract me, yet not withstanding are my sisters, whom I am cōmanded to loue, not to hate. And therefore wil I do that which I am enioyned. Yet meanwhile let them consider, and weigh with themselues, why and to what end they afflict & iniure me. Now againe at some other time she  
trieth

trieth me with *Ennie* a maide who vseth a two edged sword & hurteth her Sisters both in body and soule. This Wench is indeede a dangerous enimie, whose chiefeft felicitie is in her Sisters hurt : and is neuer more grieued then at there vertue and good life. Therefore when shee commeth to assault me, I say Sister you complaine and seeme to be grieued that others in this world possesse greater riches, that others, are endued with more rare bewtie, that others haue more abundantly the giftes of nature then your selfe, but I take comfort and reioyce euen in that, and think my selfe happy in wanting them. For neither in this life or the life to come : Desire I any thing but I E S V S Christ my Sauour, he is my treasure, and the treasure of Angels, he is my beauty, and the beauty of all creatures, he is my gayne, and the fountayne of all goodnes. Let others fix their loue where best it shall like them; I desire only my Sauour I E S V S, and his loue euer doe I thirst after with him is no difference twixt rich and poore, he neuer distinguisheth twixt beautifull and fowle. Yet here thou complaniest & sayest to me : this and that body abounde, and excell in wealth and beauty : such & such happines is giuen them, and not me. But on the contrary this I reply. Although these parties are possessed of these pleasures; yet haue I my selfe

selfe thinges of greater esteeme. For so noble  
 and so great is the minde that I carry, that it  
 skorneth to bestowe loue or affection: on so  
 base, so abject, and so transitory pleasures. And  
 considering that my name is called *Humility*, by  
 humility meane I to conquer my selfe. And I  
 finde the seruants and children of God, to a-  
 bounde with these, and greater blessings: but  
 not my selfe, who am a base vassall, and no way  
 worthy to be partaker thereof. Now *Ennie* see-  
 ing thee preuayleth little with her former ob-  
 jections, vrgeth in an enuious manner, the gift  
 of spirituall vertues, saying, beholde such a si-  
 ster who thou knowest right well, is more gi-  
 uen to vertue and deuotion, then thou art; is  
 more conuersant with God, and more exerci-  
 sed in contemplation, and is a Virgin of noted  
 sobriety, and modesty. To whome I streight  
 answere. For what cause desire I to be religi-  
 ous, or to be vertuous and deuoted to prayer?  
 because others should thinke better of me, then  
 they doe of my sisters, praise me, honour me,  
 or admire my vertues? or else because I would  
 be more daintely fedde, cladde more costly, or  
 abound in worldly pleasures. No truely, but  
 for this cause only, that I may serue and please  
 God, and that my sweete Sauour Iesus, may  
 by me, and in me, be praysed and honoured.  
 Therefore is it my dutie, and that which I am

bound to rejoyce in , when I see that my most  
louing Lord and Master , hath such vertuous  
deuout seruants, that be wholly giuen to his ser-  
uice and prayer, and endued with most rare ho-  
lines of life , and spende their time in Religious  
exercises . And I hold it my duety to pray to  
God, to giue them greater perfection , & more  
abundant grace, whereby he may be more high-  
ly honored of them . For if I had but the least  
tast of Gods loue in me, wherein not my part &  
duety to labour what I cold : that he might be  
known, honored and loued of all the world, &  
to pray that he would bestowe his grace on all  
men, whereby he might of them be continually  
honored? Therefore most accursed Wench, flie  
farre from my sight . Thou knowest not what  
charitable Loue is , considering thou art the  
daughter of that wicked, damnable , and false  
*Apostata* . For I would if it pleased God, that he  
deprived me of all spirituall & corporall good,  
which of his bountie he hath bestowed on me,  
and giue them to others, who with them would  
honor , and prayse him more then I doe , who  
am so barraine and vnfruitfull a soyle, and haue  
receaued his grace and giftes in vaine. For I de-  
sire nothing in this world, but Gods prayse and  
honor ; and will daily seeke it , how dearly so  
euer I obtayne it . See then wretched Wench  
how farre thou art deceaued . Markest thou

not

not that God knoweth what he doeth? he seeth plainly that these vessels, into which so abundantly he infuseth his blessings: be farre more pure, & of a more humble spirit then I my self. And therefore iustly hath denyed mee such grace, seing right well that I am full of pride, & a vessell filled with anger and malice, which through haughtines of minde would proudly attempt: to scale (if it cold) the heauens themselves, which duely pondered, I rest contented with the will and pleasure of my sweete Lord IESVS, neither desire I to finde ought else but him.

## CHAPTER. 13.

*By what meanes we may expell all  
Malice from our selues.*

**T**He third daughter of *Malice*, is called *Sloth*, a most dangerous enemy, who is cold and lasie in spirituall exercises, and the seruice of GOD: Wherein consisteth the summe of our saluation. Her am I wonte to answere in this manner. Thou desirest Sister and willingly wouldest perswade me, neither to frequent the seruice of GOD: nor to vse at all anie spirituall exercises. And therefore of purpose to conquer and subdue thee: I will spende more time, in watching, and praying, and diuine contemplation, where vnto she

thus replyeth. Seest not thou thy selfe euen frozen with a cold deuotion, and to feele no whitte at all any zeale of Gods seruice in thee, but to vse thy exercises, against thy owne voluntary disposition, which prouoketh iustly the indignation of God. Neither doest thou ought els but tempt God therein: who desireth no vnwilling, or impulsive seruices; but such as proceede from a chearefull and willing minde. Then reply I againe. Away thou wicked wretch, I perceauethy meaning. Knowest thou not that at such time I shew my loue greater to God, when I serue him with my owne will be it neuer so small: then when I finde my selfe endued with extraordinary deuotion by him? art thou ignorant that God sometimes of purpose withdraweth his grace: thereby to try and prooue our strength? And then when he perceaueth vs to offer vp, and bestowe on him that little deuotion which is remayning in vs: he doubleth his grace, & heavenly consolation in vs. Yet so, that finding our selues voide of inward sensible grace, we cast not cleane away our good will, & hartie desire. Therefore whereas thou askest why being so cold, and cleane voide of deuotion, yet I goe to pray (considering as thou sayest, that is but to tempt God) assure thy selfe, although I felt in me farre lesse deuotion, and will to serue God: yet that not  
with-

withstanding I would frequent my prayers, and would set my selfe in the sight of our Lord, neither would I speake or desire ought of him, but standing before him, would yeeld to him al due honor and reuerence, imagining himselfe to be present in my sight, and that I beheld him, and that there I stooode before his high, diuine, and fearefull Majesty. That he who is the fire of loue would inflame my harte when he should thinke conuenient. Therefore submit I my self to his holy will, & am content with that which it shall please him to grannt me. And the weaker, fainter, and colder I finde my selfe, so much the nearer I will come to this fire. For if I will depart from it, then shall I finde my selfe farre colder then before. Therefore depart from me thou naughty Wench. For I doe not vse & frequent my daily prayers, my deuout contemplations, and spirituall exercises for my owne contentment, comfort, or delight; but only to this end, thereby to serue my Lord God & honour him, considering I knowe it to be his holy will and pleasure, that I should do so, and that I exercise my selfe in all vertue, and holines to the honour & prayse of his holy name. Now when this wicked mayden with her practises cannot withdraw me from the *Loue of God*. She taketh a new course, and laboureth to winne my loue from my fellow Sisters. And taking the

assistance of her before named Nouices, *Suspiti-*  
*on*, and *rash iudgmēt* assaulteth me againe, & per-  
 swadeth me to hate and malice my sisters, and  
 to carry a sinister opinion of them, whereby I  
 should, either suspect some ill in them, or else  
 rashly without some just cause condemne thē:  
 hence proceede contempt, repining, murmu-  
 ring, and detraction. But my selfe with the as-  
 sistance of my *Purpose* marking her; presently  
 answere. It beseemeth not so base, and so ab-  
 ject a maide as my selfe, to judge amisse of my  
 sisters, or Superiours: neither lawfull for sin-  
 ners to intermeddle with sacred vesselles, or  
 for beastes to come nigh the holy mountaine.  
 It best beseemeth me to account all my sisters,  
 vertuous, and holy: but my selfe most wreat-  
 ched, and full of foule sinne. For it is a se-  
 cret to me, what all men are in the sight of  
 GOD, or in what manner they shall ende  
 this mortall life. As for my selfe, I knowe  
 right well, that my pronesse to sinne, and  
 naughty appetites and desires, woulde drawe  
 me headlong to the pitte of hell, were I not  
 preferued by Gods diuine grace and mercie.  
 Therefore knowe I right vvell what I may  
 feare of my selfe and suspect, that is, whe-  
 ther my conscience, my wordes, and deedes,  
 be good: for I know my selfe, but am a stran-  
 ger to others. And therefore so much as ap-  
 pertayneth

pertayneth to my fellowes, I will choose the safest course, that is, to thinke, and speake all good of them; assuring my selfe thereby to gaine, but neuer to loose. For nothing is more dangerous, then to be ruled by our owne will, and to refuse a certainty, for an vncertainty. Charity neuer thinketh amisse. And I finde it a charge great enough for me, to judge and discern mine owne conscience, my affections, my wordes, and deedes: and not to busie my selfe in censuring these, not curiously to intermeddle in others actions. For vvho made me a Iudge, betweene God and my sisters? or betweene them and their owne consciences? Truly no man. Avoide thou therefore, or hast thou ought else to say? I plainly see thou art nowe ouercome, in seeking to suggest to me a suspition of my sisters, vvhich is a most damnable, and wicked thing, and wholly repugnant to holy, and true meaning simplicity, whereof God himselfe is the chiefest Author: with vvhome, no man may, or can at any time dissemble. And if any man will say, that mistrust, or suspition may be admitted, and allowed in a Superiour, or any one that hath rule ouer others, and that my before alleadged reasons bee not sufficient to refute him, let him assure himselfe, that greate diligence,

much wisedome, and carefull circumspection, must therein be vsed: and that for this respect, as experience teacheth vs. If a man wil be suspicious of his wifes loyalty and honesty; & she shall perceauē her husbandes distrust: although perhaps before she were true to him, and honest; yet may she thereby be moued to disloyalty. Whereupon *Seneca* saith, *Suspition is the cause of many mens sinne*. Therefore considering their intention and purpose is good: vvhý shouldest thou say their actions are naught, when in all likelihoode they might erre, either through ignorance, or simplicity, or want of experience, by some sodaine motion, or humane frailtie, or by some naturall imperfection which they are subject to. And in all these accidents, no malicious, or foolish rash judgment is to be giuen. But rather we must pittie and be sorrowfull for such imperfections, and excuse them charitably for *the Love of God*. But if this answere in reason will not suffice thee, because thou saist their offences be too apparent, then I say, God by his secret judgment suffereth such thinges to happen, through whose prouidence, all thinges happen, that exceede our grosse capacities. And as he neuer ceaseth of himselfe to doe good in vs: so sometime permitteth he that we fall into such temptations, which notwithstanding hee oft  
turneth,

turneth, either to the good of him that offended, or else, to the good of others, that haue seene it. Take thou heede therefore, thou proceede no farther herein. For hee that will take vpon him to judge others, vndertaketh that which appertayneth to GOD, or rather desireth that himselfe were GOD. Marke then wicked wretch, what befell thy Father, when he aspired to be like vnto GOD. Farther, a horse, or any other labouring beast, is not of so malicious, or enuious a nature, that he suspect, or holde in jealousy his fellowe beastes, or censure their actions in a wronge vnderstanding. But hath his minde onlie sette on his journey, and that hee may carry his burthen according to his Masters minde. Neither regardeth hee if any of his fellowes erre in their way, but with an honest emulation will labour to his power, to followe, or goe before those he ought to imitate: which if he cannot, yet will he keepe the way that he is directed, and not intermeddle with any but himselfe. Neither will he seeke at any time to goe backe againe, or rest in his journey; except thereby he may performe what he vndertaketh the better: neither grudge or repine at that he is commaunded, or backbite, or slander his Master, or any other. Considering then, that I haue made my selfe

a beast for *the Love of God*: I must humble and carry my selfe like a beast, and intermedle with nothing but with my selfe.

## CHAPTER. 14,

*Of other exercises of Humility.*

**D***Esire* hauing with admiration attentiuely marked the exercises of *Humilitie*, said vn to her. Now finde I that true Lady Mother, which I haue heard: that *Humilitie* conteyneth in her selfe, all iustice, vertue, peace, quietnesse, and happinesse, and all spirituall, and temporall comfort, and contentation. Yet farther, I desire to know one doubt; whether these naughty wenches, when they come in here amongst you, be knowne by sight: or whether they take the habit of your Virgins, and so by subteltie intermingle amongst them: or what meane and way you haue to discouer them. **HVM.** Truly Son, thy question is a matter of great importance. Knowe therefore that the *Diuine goodnesse* hath hanged vp a Lampe in the midst of our chamber, called *good Conscience*, which burneth day and night, beeing kindled with the oyle of his *Mercy*, and the wicke, or cotton of *holy Scripture*. Farther, this Lamp is to be tyed with a rope, called *Watch ouer our harts*, to a nayle, which is called, *Watch ouer our senses*: Now so long as this Lamp is kindled and burneth: we neuer feare them, because we doe presently

sently know them. And although they intermingle themselves with the good: yet by their gate, we easely discernethē. For they be crooked shouldered, and hault, and limp in their pace, so that they neither can goe speedely, nor according to the vowe they made. But if through our sinnes this Lampe be extinguished, or by our negligence the nayle slippe out, or the rope chaunce to breake, or our Lord for our demerits withdrawe the oyle (which he neuer doth except we first shedde it) then are we in darknesse, and all things fall out to the worst for vs. Therefore pray wee dayly to our Lord God, that it will please him of his goodnesse, to lighten our Lamp, saying with the Prophet *David: For thou O Lord dost lighten my Lampe: lighten O God my darknes.* DE. God I beseech him, giue you his grace & charity: for you haue greatly comforted my spirits. HVM. Take nowe for thy companions these Virgins here, & let them so long accompany thee, vntil thou be thoroughly armed with true feare: that if by chaunce these wicked wēches fortune to meete thee, they aduenture not to shew their hate & malice against thee, nor endeuour to withdraw thee from among vs. Here hast thou *Seueritie* against *Concupiscence of the flesh* the first. *Manhood or strength* against *Concupiscence of the eyes* the secōd. *Humility* against *Pride of life* the third.

*Diligence*

*Diligence* against *Negligence*, the fourth. *Gentlenesse* against *Malice*, the fift. And now the grace of God be alwayes with thee.

## CHAPTER. 15.

*Of the vertues, that be daughters  
of Humilitie.*

**H** V M. Thus by the grace of Almighty God, and the helpe and assistance of my forenamed husbnde : Iouercome and subdue my enemies, and my selfe. *Desire* much pleased with this discourse of *Humility*, said to her : D E. I entreate you Lady Mother, that it may stand with your good likeing, that I may visit and be acquainted with the Virgins of this society. H V M. Proceede my Sonne assisted with Gods grace, most willingly I assent to thy desire. And thou daughter, which art steward of this house, accompany him, and shewe him the house, and bring him to the Celles of euerie Virgin. This said, *Desire* departed chearefully out, of the Lady Mothers chamber, accompanied with *Nihilipensio* or *Contempt of all vnnecessary cares*. Who was steward of the house, & gouernesse of the Nouices, and was carried by her to the Cell of a Virgin, who was the first, & eldest daughter of *Humility*, called *Confession*, of whome he asked the manner, of her life and conditions. C O N F. I am the daughter of our Mother *Humility*, and the scholler of this  
Vir.

Virgin here our gouernesse, with whome I oft frequent, and am much delighted with her familiarity, and acknowledge my selfe what I am, according as I finde my selfe in examining my conscience. *Desire* thought this Virgin of rare and singuler vertue, and departing from her was brought into the Cell of an other daughter of *Humility*, whose name was *Desire of Contēpt*, who receauing him curteously, was asked of *Desire*, both her name and conditions. VIR. my name is *Desire of Contempt*, because I desire, not to be honoured or esteemed of any man. *Desire* wondered hearing this Virgin desire to be so much contemned, considering how different it was from the mindes of most men. But admired her vertues, finding, she did it for the *Loue of God*. And leauing her, was brought into the Cel of an other Virgin, whose name was *To reioyce in being contemned*. Of whome *Desire* being entertayned, demāded likewise her name and conditions. VIR. My name is *To reioyce to be contemned*. For I wish to be despised, scorned, and iniured for the *Loue of God*. DE. Instruct me I beseech you how I may attayne to this vertue, for such is the haughtines of my proude minde, that I doe not only reioyce: but am grieued and repine if I be contemned, scorned, despised, or iniured. VIR. That proceedeth from want of *Humility*, whose vertue  
is

is to contemne, and neglect her selfe for the *Loue of God*. And truly this is an apparant token that thou aboundest vvith pride, and ouer much selfe loue. But seing thou art by GOD conducted hither into this Monastery, we will willingly instruct thee, in all kinde of vertue, and altering thy habit, will make thee a newe man, and will direct and instruct thee, how to speake with the *Loue of God*, for other wayes thou shalt be sure for to loose thy labour. Therefore if thou wouldest attayne to my vertue, thou must imprinte in thy hart my Sister, *Desire to bee contemned*, thinking and determining thus with thy selfe, henceforth will I desire to be scorned and contemned, and to be neglected of all men for the *Loue of God*. This desire once thoroughly fixed in thy hart, thou shalt by degrees attayne to my vertue, through prayer study, and diligent endeouour. And although at the beginning thou shalt endure some labour and payne: by striving to subdue and master thy owne appetites: Yet perseuer to the end, and thou shalt gette the victorie. In so much that thou shalt rejoyce; when any thinge is said or done to thee, contrary to thy likeing. Farther thou must by degrees enforce thy selfe to desire, to be scorned, despised and contemned. For it is most true, that

no man can be humble, that is not just. And he that shall not desire, to be despised, contemned, mocked, and debased, this man cannot be called just. DE. How may that be, that whosoeuer desireth and wisheth not to bee despised, should bee said to bee a man vnjust. For by that accompt, wee shall finde but fewe just men, and in my opinion this cannot be true. VIRG. I will easely prooue what I haue said. It cannot be denied but that hee is just, which giueth to each man, that which is right: if therefore man can challenge nothing else for himselfe, but to be contemned, scorned, mocked and debased; hee is not just which desireth, not to bee so vsed. DE. I would heare you prooue that, and shewe plainly how, nothing but contempt is due to man. VIRG. I will. First there is no question, but that all that which is good, ought be loued, honored, desired, and praised, and how much greater and better it is, so much the more it ought to be loued: contrarie wayes, that what so is naught, ought to be despised, hated, rejected, and suppressed. Now if it be true that euery men is ill, it followeth that of right hee must bee contemned and despised. DE. Tell mee how all men are to be said to be naught. VIRG. Only GOD is good, therefore all men are naught. DE.

DE. I cannot yeald to that conclusion. VIRG. Logitians shall proue, that none is good but God : and whatsoeuer is not God, is not good, but ill . And if man be ill , that all shame, reproach, and contempt is due to him.

## CHAPTER. 16.

*How all creatures are good, and yet none is good, but God himselfe.*

DESIRE. I am not yet resolved by thy alleadged reasons, considering thou saist that God is good, and that whatsoeuer is not God, is not to be said good. And the holy Scripture saith, that God sawe all things that he had made, & that they were not only good, but very good . Farther, considering God is good (as indeede he is the chiefe goodnesse it selfe, and the efficient cause, and beginning of all things created) all things that he hath made must of necessity be good, that the worke be answerable to the workeman that made it. Whereupon it followeth, that whatsoeuer God hath made must of necessitie be very good. Besides, considering man is the most excellent of all corporal creatures, it is plaine, that he is not only good, but very good . And then if he be good, by thy owne rule it followeth, that both honour and loue, are due to him. VIRG. I will not maintaine a long disputation vvith thee, for that disagreeeth with the rules of Humility,

*militie*, only I will open what I haue said more at large, that thou maist better vnderstand my meaning. The scripture sayeth, that none is good but only God. Which is thus to be vnderstood, that only God is essentially good; & to be good is only proper to him. And what soeuer he hath made, may be said to be good, participating in goodnes, giue to them by God: For whatsoeuer goodnes they haue is Gods, not their owne. So when thou seest good giftes bestowed on any creature from aboue, thou must honor and loue such a creature; But this honor and loue must be referred to God, and not to the creature. Therefore our selues and all creatures are to be loued of vs, because they be good in their essence or being, as the creatures of God & this is, to loue God in his creatures. Let not therefore any man desire, to be praysted or honored for his owne sake: but for the goodnesse which God hath bestowed on him: attributing and referring it all to GOD. For it is one thing that man hath from God, but an other which he hath of him selfe. From God he hath what good soeuer is, but from himselfe whatsoeuer is ill. He hath from God that he representeth, and carrieth his Image & likeness. But of him selfe through wicked life and euell manners, he is made altogether dislike to God. Also it is giuen to him by the grace of

E j.

God,

God, to desire to be good and endued with vertue : but of himselfe hee desireth ill , and doeth those thinges that most displease God . From hence we learne that those thinges which are bestowed on man from aboue, are greatly to be honoured , and highly to be loued , which are the cōditions of his creation & his natural blessings , & yet not to be loued for his owne sake, but for the honor of God : cōtrary those thinges to be hated , which are in man himselfe , as his vices offences & al other imperfections. So that diuersly we honor & despise, loue & hate some thinges, in one & the selfe same man. And be he endued with neuer so great vertue & deuotion: Yet let him be assured, that of himselfe he hath nothing that is good , and still let him desire that in regarde of the good giftes bestowed on him by God, be they vertue, deuotion or other spirituall benefits , that God alone be honored and loued for them , and that all prayse be giuen to him as to the fountayne of all goodnes. But for the sinne in him , which he knoweth to be his owne , let him desire to be despised, hated , and condemned of all men . This doing I say he is to be accompted iust . But if euery iust man shall desire to be condemned after this sort , how great is the iniustice of a man defiled with sinne , not only not to desire to be condemned as I haue said : but to desire and labour

hour to be honoured and extolled : Let not therefore a wretched sinner thinke and imagine that he hath shewed much *Humility*, in desiring to be contemned, or let him not be the better perswaded of him selfe, therefore considering the most holy , vertuous , and deuoutest man is bound of duty to desire as much.

## CHAPTER. 17.

*Of the same.*

**D***Esire* was not a little pleased herewith, and said to this Virgin. D E. I beseech you Sister instruct and direct me, by what meanes I may attayne to this holy Desire. V I R. Two wayes there bee, by which thou maist obtayne it, which are the *Loue of God*, and a *holy Purpose*, to object & imbase thy selfe like to a labouring beast : to which *holy Purpose* our *Gouvernessse* hath wedded her self. And if thou wilt be ruled by my directions , thou shalt finde thy selfe not a little assisteth thereby. D E. Most willingly will I be instructed by you. V I R. Then assure thy self that the *Loue of God* whome I perceauē thou art so desirous to finde, hath no more dangerous & hurtful enemy thē is thy owne body, Inure thou thy selfe therefore daily to this custome that euery morning thou say to thy soul. Let me see now my soule , how thou wilt this day hate thy body, which is so great an enemy, to thy sweete Saviour and Creator I E S V S,

and how much thou wilt desire, that it may be despised, afflicted, tormented, and scorned. At night likewayes say thus againe. Now shewe me my soule how this day, thou hast despised, thy body so rebellious against thy most sweete Lord I E S V S, & how thou hast desired that it might be afflicted, and iniured of all men, and hast laboured that nothing be pardoned it, but hast carried thy self most seuerely against it. This doing deare Brother, and still conuersing in these good thoughts, and euer perseuering in this thy desire, this only exercise in time will bring thee, to an exceeding perfection of perfit *Humility*, and will teach how to ouercome, and put to flight the most dangerous enemy, and be trayer of thy soule; and in conclusion thou shalt thereby attayne, to so greate hatred of thy selfe: that thou shalt wish & labour to be condemned and despised. And when hereafter thou shalt happen to be condemned of some man; then sticke fast to me, & forsake not my vertue. But with rejoycing and thanks giuing to God, say thus to thy selfe. Now thanks be to God, who hath reuenged me of my enemy. *Desire* being much contented with the direction of this Virgin, tooke leaue of her, and was brought into the Cell of an other daughter of *Humility*, whose name was *Simplicity*, who receauing him louingly, was asked by him her  
name,

name, vertue, and conditions. SIMP. My name is *Simplicitie*. My office and conditions is to behaue my selfe simply, sincerely, and plainly towards all men: and to conceaue no hurte or ill meaning of any thing, that I shall happen to heare or to see: but to thinke all thinges to be done rightly and holylye, and to thinke ill of no body but my selfe: For I euer suspect and feare my selfe, and continually watch ouer my thoughts and desires, still looking into my selfe, and holding open the right eye of perfect wisdome, whereby I may eschewe and auoide all euell, and our Mother *Humility*, be made more strong in her vertue. DE. What? is not *Humilitie* endued with all kinde of vertue, except thou hold, and keepe open thy eye. SIMP. No considering *Simplicity* without *Wisdome*, is of no estimation, but hurteth rather then helpeth. For the *Loue of God* loueth no man, but such as shall come with true knowledge and *Wisdome*.

## CHAPTER. 16.

*Of the manners and conditions of Simplicitie.*

DESIRE. Now then I desire to be instructed by you my Sister, how and in what manner you behaue your selfe, simply towards all sortes of people. SIMP. In three thinges, which are, in thought, worde, and deede. First I neuer vse to thinke vpon those

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thinges:

things : which are aboue my knowledge & capacity, neither desire I, the honors, estimations, & vanities of this world, but stil perseuer in this humble thought, that I am the most abject of al the world, and vnworthiest that liueth to be the seruant of God: thinking all other holy & vertuous, & replenished with al kindes of grace & vertue. Secondly I resolute to vse no flattering, feyned, or deceitful wordes, but a playne affirmation or else a deniall, that is only, yea, yea : or no, no. For whatsoeuer is more, proceedeth not of good, but from the roote & ground of vanity. Thirdly I haue determined to busie my selfe, in no worldly, curious, or vayne workes, but in such only as are simple, and yet necessary, least thereby I be drawne to vanity or singularity, & thereby be expelled & kept out from hēce. For to doe an action simply, bringeth *Humility of hart*, but otherwayes to doe is most full of perils.

DE. As how. SIMP. Thou shalt vnderstand *Desire*, that our gouernes & Lady Mother *Humilitie*, hath set me here, & imposed this charge on me, to keepe safely in this Monastery two rare Iewels which are remayning here, which are the one, *Purity of hart*, the other *Innocency*. The valew whereof is of so high esteeme, that they cannot be prised according to their worthines. For the obteyning whereof this monastery, & the other seated in this desert: where at  
the

the beginning founded & built. And what good  
 soeuer we doe, is referred to the getting & kee-  
 ping these Iewels. But if *Curiosity, Vanity, or Sin-*  
*gularitie* shold enter by the gate of our hart, our  
 mouth, or else our action they would steale &  
 carry away both these Iewels frō vs. And ther-  
 fore if any of our Virgins shall not imploy all  
 their thoughts, words, & workes to get & pre-  
 serue these: we accompte them fooles, not vn-  
 derstanding what they vndertake. DE. Why do  
 you so carefully preserue these Iewels conside-  
 ring that by your profession you haue vowed  
 pouerty? it is dangerous lest you should offend  
 in couetousnes, keeping such vnnecessary and  
 pretious iewels, cōsidering many poore people  
 may sterue through want of them. SIM. Here-  
 in thou art deceaued: For although in posses-  
 sing, louing, or desiring ritches or goods, a man  
 may sin in couetousnes, according to the intēti-  
 on, for which he shal desire them: yet can there  
 be no sin in possessing these Iewels, in regarde  
 that we desire, keepe, & preserue them only for  
 the *Loue of God*, therwith to honor & serue him,  
 at such time as it shal please him to come hither  
 amongst vs; or when we cōuerse with him in  
 his holy house. Rust and canker, consume and  
 spoile other worldly Iewels: But these that are  
 kept & layde vp in our harts, no rust, no cāker,  
 no corruption can consume. For no man can se

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them

them but he, which doth possesse them. DE. If he shall lay them open, cannot rust then hurt them? SIMP. No: for if purposely hee fnew them, that others should see them, then doth not he possesse them any longer. For he that hath them doth not thinke, he hath them but laboureth still that he may get them. And many times our Sauour doth so bestow them, that he that hath, them doth not know he hath them. Which our most louing Lord doth to this intent, that presumption and selfe liking which lurke in mens harts, should not secretly steale them and take them away. Therefore whosoever doth most of all other possesse them: doth with al secrecy that he can conceale them, and hide them.

## CHAPTER 19.

*How Purity of hart, and Innocency  
may be preserued.*

DESIRE much delighted with this discourse of *Simplicitie*, said to her. DE. tell me by what meanes these pretious Jewels may be preserued. SIMP. There is one thing amongst others very necessary, for nouices and young folkes, and the same not vnprofitable for those that be of more yeares, which is to fly and to locke, and to keepe close our gates from much company. For if a man will vse the familiarity, and fellowshippe of many, and take delight

delight to heare and to see many things, he shal hardly be able to preserue these Iewels, for our mindes may wel be compared to a looking glasse, which representeth the likenesse of anie thing set before it, or to wax which reteyneth the impresion of a zeale. D E. But how can one fly or shut the dores that liueth continually in a Religious society ? for such a person hath occasion to goe into many places, and the Superiour cōmandeth sometimes one thing, some times an other, and such a party is enforced to talke, with many & often commanded to conuerse with all sortes of people. For othei wayes he shall be accompted singuler, and singularity although it be couered with a shew of holines and vertue : Yet is it hatefull, and ought to be eschewed and shunned. S I M P. It is true as thou sayest, we must heare, see, and say manie thinges for obedience, which if we did of our owne accorde and desire, we should offende. But when obedience and charity doe moue vs there vnto (prouided we be not negligent but doe our best endeouours,) there is no doubt to be had for loosing these Iewels. D E. What must we doe in doing our endeouours ? S I M P. It is needful that whosoever would keepe these Iewels of *Puritie & Innocencie*, & either for obedience or necessity cannot be seclused, nor liue in solitary or vnfrequēted places, it is necessary  
I say

I say that he make me his companion, who trusting to my fellowshippe, (he trauaile all the world about) yet needeth not feare to loose these Iewels. DE. I desire you to explaine your meaning by similitudes, for so, such as be but simple shal the better vnderstand you. SIMP. It is requisite for a man, that will haue *Puritie of hart and Innocencie*, (which are the especiall meanes to attayne to all vertues, and by which we may readily come to all perfection, perfect charity, and the chiefe marke which we stoote at, that is the *Loue of God*.) It is necessary as I haue said to attayne to these vertues, to fly conuersation, & shut the gates against cōpany. If he cannot do so, then let him take me a cōpanion, and in all things that he shall heare or see, still keepe me in his right eye. And when the left eye shall seeke to behold any thing, that may tast of couetousnes, or of foolish, or of rash judgement, then let him behold the same with the right eye of *Simplicitie*, thinking & perswading thus simply with himself. That euery man and woman, brother & sister &c. is the Angell and Sonne of Almighty God, & that all other thinges are certayne instruments or Organes, which without intermission doe laude & praise their Creator. And by the same rule what ill so euer he shal heare, or se of his neighbour, let the right eye excuse it, & cōster it to the best. And let

let him prayse & glorifie God, for all his creatures which the last eye of couetousnes shall allure him to desire, calling to minde the beauty, comelines & goodnes of his Creator, and all other his proprieties, saying thus to him selfe. I will not desire, or loue any thing created to any other end, but that in them, and with them I may loue and prayse God, likewise in all his wordes and actions, it is very necessary that he associate himself with me. DE. How shall we say, all the actions of me are done in simplicity. SIMP. When their intention shal be simple, pure; and right, and all that they doe being of it selfe good, shall be also just & right, in all circumstances of time, place & person, & shal not do any thing, but either for the honor & prayse of God, or for the good of the soule, or body of himselfe, or his neighbour, or els for the benefit of the whole cōmon wealth, he that doth thus, walketh simply in al his actions. And whosoever shal choose & keep *Simplicity* for his cōpanion, he liueth & walketh securely & happily.

## CHAPTER. 20.

*Of Pouertie.*

**D***Esire* much pleased with this discourse of *Simplicitie*, taking his leaue of her was brought to the Cell of an other of *Humilities* daughters, whose name was *Pouerty*, of whome being louinglie entertayned, he spake

to her as followeth. D E. I am not a little delighted with your fellowship & acquaintance, assuring my selfe, how dearly you are beloued of *the Lone of God*, & therefore desire to know your conditions and course of life. P O V. I contemne & refuse for *the Lone of God*, to haue or possesse any worldly or transitory goods. D E. In what thing then, consisteth your joy and only comfort? P O V. My only treasure and riches is for *the Lone of God*, to be poore, and possesse nothing. D E. I cannot but greatly meruaile thereat, considering that as I haue heard of others, this Monastery was first founded and built by a Lord, that is the most noble, rich, and bountifull of al the world. What then should be the reason, or his intention, that the inhabitantes of it, should be so poore and needy? neither vnderstand I how your pouertie can be so acceptable to him. P O V. I will tell you. That Lord, which is founder & builder of this Monastery, is King and Master of all the world, and hath, and keepeth his riches and treasures all in his owne handes. And yet notwithstanding, it is his will and pleasure, that we should liue in continuall pouerty, to the end we fixe not, or settle our loue and affection, on any other creature, but on himselfe. He could if it so pleased him, bestow abundance on vs: but to his best beloued, he doth not; because they should

should loue him only, and hate this world, and the vanities thereof. And wee cannot aske a more manifest token of his loue towards vs, then that he suffereth vs to bee in necessity in this miserable life, & sendeth vs not those pleasures, which fraile flesh would couet. And yet farther, he will haue vs spend our liues in po- uerty, least temporall, and needles cares should ouercome our weake mindes; but will, that we should serue him, with quiet cōtented thoughts and not be mooued, either with losse, or gaine of worldly commodities, or too much rejoyce or lament, in prosperity, or aduersity, with o- uer great mirth, or exceeding sorrow: but haue our harts still vnited to him; in peace, and con- tentation? without any mislike. For such is the disposition of *the Loue of God*, that he will not inhabit, but in still and sequestred places. DE.  
What is the especial vertue that is in you. POV  
To conforme and frame my selfe according to my sisters, amongst whome I liue. And al- though I desire to possesse nothing: yet to keepe out and expell an enemy of ours, that seeketh daily to enter amongst vs, and destroy our garden, and eate vp our fruit, whose name is *Singularity*: our Lady Mother will haue mee liue like my other sisters. And yet that I loose not the reward of my vertue shee hath mar- ried me to a holy *Purpose*, whose name is, to  
ask

*aske nothing.* And farther, she telleth me if I wil  
 attaine to perfection, that I must rest content  
 with that which is giuen me, be it much, or litle;  
 and accept as thankfully, of grosse and homely  
 diet, as of that which shall be prouided at the  
 costliest price, and to leaue part of that which is  
 allowed to me, and to be content for the *Loue of*  
*God*, to take so much only, as necessity shal de-  
 fire. DE. That is, as if one should desire to be  
 better then good, or labour to doe more then  
 he were bound to doe. For if I rightly vnder-  
 stand it, that Lord which hath founded and e-  
 rected this Monastery, commaundeth you to  
 haue the spirit of pouerty, as the Prophet saith.  
*If thou abound in riches, beware thou settle not thy*  
*loue on them.* Whereby I gather, that the vertue  
 of pouerty, doth not consist in hauing, or pos-  
 sessing much, or little: but in the loue, or con-  
 tempt we take in them. P O V. I doe not de-  
 ny, but that the spirit of pouerty consisteth in  
 the minde, yet notwithstanding it is much sa-  
 fer for the *Loue of God*, to possesse nothing:  
 considering our loue and affection to rich and  
 beautifull thinges, is so fraile and prone, that  
 hardly can wee haue them, without fixing our  
 loue on them. Least therefore such worldlie  
 riches shoulde gayne some parte of our loue  
 from the *Loue of God* which is already but smal  
 towards him, it is good (as the saying is) to re-  
 moue

move the strawe farther from the fier . For the *Loue of God*, doth chalenge of duty all the loue of man wholly to him selfe , and manie there bee that herein flatter themselues , saying, I doe not immoderatelic loue this or that thing , neither would I to much sorrow if it where taken from me . But belecue mee affection , and loue is so subtle a thing , that hardly are men founde not louing what they possesse . Neither can we haue a better example hereof then our SAVIOUR CHRIST himselfe , who when he could haue possessed the whole ritches of the world , without feare to loue or affect them extraordinarily : yet remember how needely , and poorely not himselfe liued , but also his Blessed Mother and his Holy APOSTLES . Which , howe can we anie other wayes conceaue : but that we must neither affect , or possesse any worldly ritches : For which cause I haue clearly forsaken all such vnnecessary thinges , as I vsed to haue with me in my Cell reteyning nothing else , but the Image of my sweete SAVIOUR hanging naked on the ✠ Crosse , thereby to remember his great loue to mee . I once vsed to keepe many books with mee , but nowe possesse only a Bible , the life of SAINTES , and the life of my SAVIOUR IESVS , with some fewe other for  
my

my deuotions . And rest fully contented to meditate on sweete Iesus, and to busie my selfe with the booke of his holy life.

## CHAPTER. 21.

*Of Obedience.*

**D***Esire* receauing no lesse contentment from this Virgin , tooke leaue of her, and was brought to the Cel of an other daughter of *Humility*, called *Obedience*. To her *Desire* yealded very great reuerence, in that she seemed to him to be of high dignity, and authority, & of great estimation with *the Loue of God*, and more beloued of him, then her other sisters . Now *Desire* for reuerence sake, offering to kisse her hand, was denyed of her, in regard that being the daughter of *Humility*, she would not allowe either reuerence or honour, to be shewed to her, but willing *Desire* to sitte downe by her, he asked of her, her orders and conditions.

O B E D. I am married to a holy *Purpose*, called, *to omitte nothing I ought to doe*. Hee is a mighty, strong, and worthy Knight, who alone is able to subdue & put to flight, the most dangerous beast in all the world, called *Selfe Will*. Which beast doth destroy, kill, and swallowe vp : all that loue and obey her; and shee doth with a kinde of flattering allurements, entise and drawe to her al obstinate people, of which, few forsake her, vntill she drawe them into hell, &

vtter

utter damnation. The greatest part of people, and almost all forsake me, notwithstanding it is most certaine, that without me, no man can finde the *Loue of God*, who is a Lord of so great dignity, and excellency, that the whole world cannot be compared with him. And in regard it hath pleased almighty God: to bestow so good and noble a husband on me, I do not any thing but what he shall command me. Neither doe I desire to be eased, or remitted, from that is commanded me, except some vrgent necessity constrain me thereunto. And in regard of theeues and robbers, which lie so secretly amongst vs, that hardly they can be discried, or discovered by vs, I neuer dare to walke alone. D E. What companion doe you vse? O B E D. First I take with me my dogge for a companion, called as yours is, *Goodwill*. Next I joyne to me my sister *Simplicity*, and my daughters *Donotion*, *Chearefulnesse*, *Diligence*, *perseuerance*, and *Purity*. But chiefly our Lady Mother *Humility*, doth alwaies assotiate her selfe with mee. All these of necessitie must I haue with me, if I will securely walke to doe that, which I am commanded. D E. Tell mee I beseech you, How doth your Mother *Humility* joyne her selfe with you for that as yet I doe not vnderstand? O B E D. In any thing that I vnder- take and doe, be it neuer so great, I doe not

flatter my selfe that I haue done it well, neither haue I any confidence in that I doe, or by doing any thing well, growe into pride of minde. Neither perswade I my selfe, that others could not doe it besides my selfe, or that they could not doe it so well as my selfe, neither thinke I my selfe good, if I doe any thing that is good, or woulde be praysted for doing it, or thought by others apt and fitte to doe it; but with all humility I giue the thankes to God, in that it hath pleased him, to bestowe vnderstanding, wisdom, and ability on me: for the loue of him to doe so good a thing. And I say to my selfe, in regard it hath pleased God to bestowe his grace on me, to execute such a worke, for this thing especially I holde my selfe bound to him. And therefore desire I nothing else of others, but that they will honor and praise God. And that vntill the last day of my life, nothing but labour and paine be allotted to me, all honour, and praise be to Almighty God, and benefite, and all good vnto my neighbour. Nothing in this worlde as I say, I wish to my selfe: being assured, I deserue nothing that is good of my selfe, neither desire I any thing else, but that it woulde please our Lorde to bestowe his loue on me, that thereby I may daiely encrease in vertue, and good life, and neuer offend him, but that in the last houre of my death, it will please

please him (as I hope) to shewe himselfe loving and mercifull to me.

## CHAPTER. 22.

*Of Chastitie.*

**D***Esire* taking great comfort in this confession with *Obedience*, leauing her, vvas brought to the Cell of the last daughter of *Humility*, whose name was *Chastny*. Of whome as before desire demanded her conditions. **CHAST.** I am as thou knowest the daughter of *Humility of hart*, and haue attending on me two Virgins or handmaides the one called *Abstinence*, the other *Bashfulness*. My spouse or husband is called *Watch of hart*, who is alwayes attended with a body, called *Watch of senses*. **DE.** I beseech you bring mee to the sight of this Boy. **CHAST.** I will doe that willingly. *Desire* now much meruailed at the furniture of this Boy, for in his hand he held a bridle and a stone, a kerchiefe or a vaile, and a chayne with a locke, to whome hee thus spake, I desire thee my Sonne to declare to mee the true signification of this furniture of thine. **BOY.** This bridle is to restrayne a naughty beast of my Masters, vvhich although she be little, yet when shee breaketh lose shee ouerthroweth all men, neither can

any man rule her but our Porter the *Fear* of God. D E. What is the name of this naughty beast? B O Y. *The Tongue*. D E. What doest thou with this stone? B O Y. I stoppe holes with it, which are in this house, called the *Eares*, least theeues enter thereat, as often they doe, when it chaunceth that they be not stopped; and sometimes also, I put it in my mouth, that thereby I may enjoyne my selfe to silence. D E. By that meanes, others will say thou art dumbe. B O Y. I am not dumbe, but for the *Loue of God*, I make my selfe dumbe. D E. What seruice canst thou shewe to him thereby? B O Y. Much. Considering that by this dore those two jewelless are lost, which *Simplicity* spake of, I meane *Innocencie* and *Purity of hart*, and so long as I continue dumbe, I provide, that the wine which our Virgins vse, runne not out, or be shedde. D E. What? Couldst thou not looke to that, if thou shouldest speake? B O Y. No. For the spygotte cannot be pulled out, but the wine will bee shedde. D E. Might not a vessell be sette vnder, to saue the wine that runneth out? B O Y. There might, but great wisdome, vnderstanding, and fortitude, is to be vsed. And I am yet but little and young, neither can easely performe that office, and so soone, al the wine might runne out of the vessell, and nothing but

but winde remaine in it. D E. What signifieth this kerchiefe, or vaile? B O Y. It is called *Purity*, and it serueth to couer the left eye, which causeth sensuality. D E. Do you couer the right eye also? B O Y. No. for that is the eye of *Simplicity*, which not only doth hurt, but also bringeth forth all good, and fruitfull things. But the left, is the eye of *Sensuality*, which is of a more sharp sight, then the left, and annoyeth vs with many discōmodities: & finally, bringeth death it selfe: wherfore it is of necessity, that it be couered with this vaile, that thereby we may perceauē al things with purity. D E. Deliuē it more plainly, how we may se al things more purely and clearely. B O Y. All things are scene with a pure hart: when they are beheld with one of these three eyes. Either with the eye of taking good edification for our selues, or with the eye of honoring & glorifying God, or with the eye of excusing & pitying our neighbor D E. This yet is obscure, declare your meaning more plainly. B O Y. I know thou dost vnderstand me sufficiently. D E. Although my selfe vnderstand it, yet peraduenture others would expect to be instructed more plainly. B O Y. I allowe this wil & desire to profit others, to be both vertuous, and worthy praise: considering it is a signe of no small vertue & charity, both to seeke our owne good & benefit: & also that which may be the

good of all men. And thou hast heard manie thinges spoken in parables amongst vs, the exposition whereof, is both profound & fruitfull: therfore when thou shalt returne hither againe, thou maist make a certaine cōmentary of such thinges as thou hast heard, and seene : whereby thou maist draw them out more at large and (as S. Greg. did vpon holy Iob) explaine them more copiously. D E. You say well, & doubt not but (God assisting me) I wil performe as much. For notwithstanding to the learned, these similitudes may serue, without farther explanation : yet to the simple sort, it will bee necessary to haue a more plaine exposition. And it will be a verie great encouragement to me, to vndertake it : if I be aduised to it by your counsel. But now proceed to tel the meaning of your furniture. Why doe you carry this chaine with a locke ? BOY. It is called *Tēperance of the mouth*, wherewith we locke the gates of this house, least the Virgins that dwell here, might wander abroad. For if we had not this chaine & this locke, ther would be no religion amongst vs, but all thing would be vaine. And this know for certaine, so long as I keepe my left eye couered, although my eyes be open, yet I see nothing. D E. How can that be, that your eyes being open yet you shall not see ? B O Y. Because my eyes are fixed in my head, and although sometime I looke downe to the  
the

the earth : yet the reflection of my eyes returneth to my head,

## CHAPTER. 23.

*The Conclusion of the first part.*

**D***Esire* hauing discoursed after this manner with *Chastity*, departed frō her with great contentment. And being guided out of this Monastery by the forenamed Steward, who tolde him he had now seene al the virgins of this Monastery, he asked if there were no other thing to bee seene. S T. If thou shalt well obserue what thou hast here heard, and seene, and shalt with thy best endeuour seeke to put them in execution, thou art sufficiently furnished to finde out the *Love of God*. But yet before thou depart hence, I will shew thee a tree, that groweth in our gardē. *Desire* beholding this goodly tree, beganne much to admire it, and the rather, because it carried two sorts of fruit, and said to the Steward. D E. What kinde of fruit is this? S T. The fruit that groweth on the lower boughes, which are pale, and of diuers colours, is called *Distrust of our selves*. But that which groweth on the toppe of the tree, and is of a pleasant red colour, is called *Trust in God*, with which fruit all that come hither are to be fedde. For except they shall feede vpon this fruit their labour is in vaine, and to no ende, come they hither. D E. Wil it please you to bestowe part thereof

on me, that I may eate thereof in my journey, I am to take. STEW. I will eate thereof, of the fruit of the lower boughes which is, *Distrust of thy selfe*, as much as shall be necessary: and fill all thy pockets with the fruit of the higher boughes, that thou maist eate thereof in thy journey & this wil serue thee, vntil thou come to the house of the *Loue of God*. Now *Desire* sufficiently satisfied, with the fruit of the lower boughes, filled his pockets and bosome with the fruit of the higher boughes, and said. DE. I beseech you Sister, now shew to me the speediest and most ready way to the house of the *Loue of God*. STEW. I rejoyce to se thee so furnished, and desirous to vndertake the journey to finde the *Loue of God*. Yet not withstanding, I feare if thou trauaile alone, thou wilt hardly finde out the readiest way, therefore wil I giue thee trusty companions of our society who shall goe, and guide thee the right way thou art to take. DE. Is not *Goodwil* my dogge sufficient for that? STEW. No truely. For although he be very good, yet is not he sufficient for such a journey, wherein are encountered, not only many dangerous wilde beasts, hollowe pittes, rough wayes, bushes & bryers: but theeues, spoylers, and robbers, and such as seeke to kill and destroy all passengers, wherefore it is wisdom not to trust, to thy dogge alone.

alone. D E. For these alleaged reasons I pray you, appoint me such cōpanions as you thinke necessary. S T E W. Then take in thy company our Porter, the *Feare of our Lord*, who is a worthy and excellent man, whose company if thou wilt not forgoe, take likewise with thee his daughter *Bashfulness*, whome to be sure to keepe, take an herbe with thee, called *Humble casting downe of thy eyes*. And yet farther take with thee an other companion, called *Simplicitie*. And now *Desire*, goe on thy way being guarded with Gods blessing. But yet marke well this one lesson, although thou chaunce to loose the *Feare of God*, or *Simplicitie*; Yet be sure to keepe warely thy dogge about thee, for he will serue to finde them againe. And see that thou giue him of the fruit in thy pocket, to eate of. And when thou art gone hence, keepe the way which leadeth on the left hand, where thou shalt finde a path, which is a nearer way, then others, which will bring the directly to the house of *Charitie*, wherein dwelleth the *Love of God*. D E. What is the name of that path, that if I happe to misse my way, I may aske it of other. S T E W. It is called *Patience*, which is the ready and nearest way to the house of *Humilitie* and *Charitie*. †.

DESIDERIUS.  
THE SECOND PART.

CHAPTER. I.

*Of Patience.*



ESIRE being now well refreshed with the aboue named fruites, and accompanied with *Good will* his dogge, and the *Feare of God* the Porter on the one side, and with *Simplicity* on the other side, & hauing also his pockets filled with the fruit of *Confidence in God*, departed chearefully out of the house of *Humility* & willingly vndertoke the way of *Patience*. Which although he were told to be short & pleasant: Yet found he it rough, hard and vnpleasant by reason of many brables & bushes, which made him cōplaine, & say to *Simplicie*. DE. O good God how hard, and difficult a way is this, contrary to that I thought it to be. SIMP. Let not that seeme strange, to thee *Desire* for therefore is it called the way of *Patience*, which if it were not sharpe & full of difficulties, it should not be called, and knowne by that name, neither should the house to which it leadeth be held in so great esteeme: if the way were playne and easie, and passible for all people. But as it

is, none passe it but those that be thoroughly exercised. And hast thou not heard the old pro-  
uerbe. That no good thing can be obteyned without labour and paine; or pleasant, but first by tasting the sower? wherefore hauing now vndertaken and entred the way: thou must of necessity endure the hardnes, comforted with this, that it will not long continue. For whoso-  
euer will seeke to take the fish, must be contented to wette his foote. And coldest thou imagine, that a thing so pretious as the *Loue of God*, cold be obteyned without labour and payne. Remember the saying of Seneca the Philosopher. *A thing of worth cannot be bought for a trifle. For with great labours wee archiue great matters.* And thou art deceaued, Desire if thou thinke to get so rich a treasure with no labour, neither wouldst thou make any great accompt, of the *Loue of God*, if thou coldest finde him without any trauaile. Goe to therefore coragiously and feare not labour, considering that after it, thou shalt rest and bee comforted vvith the *Loue of God*, and thou wilt esteeme the greatlier of him, and loue him better; for the more payne thou endurest in finding him out: the greater will be thy joy and contentement after. And if thou fortune to be weary in the way, eate of the fruit which thou hast, called *Confidence of God*; and thou shalt

shalt finde thy selfe to be strengthened againe.  
 But if thou wilt not feele the wearisomes of  
 thy journey, do as trauailers do, that passe ouer  
 the paine with singing as they goe. *Desire* some  
 what cōforted with this direction of *Simplicie*  
 said. D E. How can we sing, being accompa-  
 ned with this reuerend and graue old Father.  
 S I M P. It is his custome to shewe himselfe  
 graue in gesture and apparell : but otherwise  
 he is sociable and pleasant in conuersation, for  
 he is the brother of the *Loue of God*, & singeth  
 sweetly, especially when he heareth vs sing,  
 not for wantonnes and leuity, but to cheare vp  
 our spirits, and comfort our selues, being weary  
 in our journey. D E. How shall I sing that  
 haue no voyce. S I M P. Thou canst not lacke  
 voyce, that art a voyce thy selfe. *Desire* mer-  
 uailed to heare her say, he was a voyce and an-  
 swered. D E. How can you say that I am a  
 voyce? S I M P. Thou, as all other creatures  
 wast created by Gods word, & it is plaine that  
 a voyce doth follow a word, considering there-  
 fore that so sone as God had spoke the word,  
 presently all creatures were made : it followeth  
 that all creatures are voyces. D E. Explayne  
 this yet more plainly. S I M P. Speech and  
 the word are but one thing. For speech is not  
 that which is deliuered with the mouth : but  
 which being conceaued in the minde, is rety-  
 ned

ned within . But that which is expresseſſed with the mouth , is a voyce , declaring the ſpeech or word , conceaued in the hart . As for example if I conceive ſuch a thought in my minde , that thou art a man , this is a word or ſpeech , and although I vtter it not , yet I hold it within mee . But if I ſhall expreſſe it with my mouth , & ſay thou art a man , this is a voyce , explaining the ſecret conceyte of my minde . DE . If I be a voyce , whoſe voyce am I . SIMP . Thou art the voice of God , by whome thou waſt created to this prayſe , honor & glory . DE . What thing then do I ſpeake of my ſelfe , if I be a voyce ? SIMP . Thou ſayeſt God is good , by the goodnes of that eſſence , which thou haſt of God , euen ſo by thy owne beauty , thou giveſt a witneſſe that he is beautifull , through whoſe beauty thou haſt attayned to ſuch goodnes and beauty , to conclude , whatſoeuer God hath created in thee , it is but a certayne voyce explaining the vertue & goodnes of him . DE . How can you ſay that , whatſoeuer is in me created by God is a voyce : & not abſolutely whatſoeuer is in me is a voyce . SIMP . Thus , this ſins and wickednes which God hath not made , are not his voyces , but thy owne , which ſpeake and declare that thou art filthy , nought , impure , and wicked . For as by the creatures of God we are ledde and brought to the knowledge of him :

him: so by those things which we do our selues,  
we may attaine to the knowledge of our selues.

## CHAPTER 2.

*How God may be knowne by his creatures.*

**D***Esire* noted this discourse of *Simplicity*, not without great admiration, who although she seemed in shew but simple: yet found he her most wise in these high and secret misteries, and said to her. *DE.* To what end wold you haue vs to sing. *SIMP.* To the end we may forgett the difficulties, and sorrowes of this miserable banishment we liue in: and loose not our hope to come to the house of Gods *Charitie*. Wherevn-to to attayne, we shall finde no small helpe in meditating vpon Gods creatures, which purposely I haue placed in this journey of *Patiēce*, that thou maiest the soner come to the *Loue of God*, if thou shalt be cōuersant in this booke of his creatures. For by *Patience* we conceaue a greater hope of the diuine scripture which is the whole world, which is no other thing then the booke of God. *DE.* Considering then that we must sing, let vs do that for which cause we are made voices, that is let vs prayse God. *SIM.* I am well contented, for so many voyces will joine with vs in singing. Sometime descāt sometime the Tenor, sometime the treble wil meete vs, & in the beginning the Basse, in the midst the Tenor & descant, in the end the Treble, & all sortes of voyces, according to the multitude

And variety of creatures, farther it is necessary (if we will doe according to the prescript of musicke) that we endeouore to bee skilfull in our song, for considering we haue voyces, we must learne & vnderstand the knowledge of singing  
 DE. Who shal teach vs that? SIM. Our owne voyces. For some creatures shall declare his power and highnes, others his goodnes, others his wisdome, others his gētlenes, others his beauty, others his sweetnes, others his greatnes, others his iustice, & others his liberality: & to this end God hath bestowed on vs a kind of knowledge of him selfe, according to every mans capacity and nature, that thereby we may sing & deliuer his prayse. For which cause I entreate thee, endeouore in this thy journey to become as expert in singing as thou cāst, & the rather because in the house of the *Lone of God*, to which thou doest trauaile, there is nothing but singing whither when thou shalt come, I would haue thee sufficiētly instructed in this arte. For who-soeuer shal haue a good voyce in this jorney, & shall often exercise it, it is thereby so amended, that it cānot change. And as every mā through daily exercise shall learne to sing in this life, so shall he bee there more excellent then others.  
 DE. Teach me I pray you, how I must sing by Gods creatures; for of my selfe I shall not easily learne it. SIMP. I will willingly do it. Now meane tyme *Desire* hauing trauailed far through

the desert : learned and proued many vertues and excellencies of our Lord and Sauour I E- S V S Christ. and the better, by the ayde, assistance, and direction of his guide *Simplicite*. Yet was he to passe many great, dangerous, and hard labours: ofte did he stumble, but *Simplicity* supported him, that he could not fall. Notwithstanding sometimes he fell, but presently *Simplicity* gaue him her hand. Sometimes he fell so dangerously, that except he had beene lifted vp againe by the help of the *Feare of God* hee neuer woulde, or coulde haue rose againe. Sometimes when he should goe forward, he retyred backe, and when he should haue receaued benefit by Gods creatures, he became much worse. For he was not sufficient careful to try out the secret vertues of voyces, neither did he greatly regard his song, but suffered him selfe to growe hoarse, vntill being pricked and put forward with the *Feare of God*, he laboured to goe forward. Oft times did thornes and bushes run into his feete, but *Simplicite* held him vp, and the *Feare of God* plucked them out againe. Sometime was he mch oppressed with sleepe, but the *Feare of God* awaked him againe. Oft times being weary, he sate downe to rest him, but *Good Will* his dogge neuer left barking, vntill he arose againe. Sometime was he so weary, that through inconstancie of mind  
he

he determined to goe backe : but presently eating of the fruite in his pocket, he recovered strength and kept on his way. Sometimes as he trauailed in the darknes of the night : hee lost both the *Feare of God* and *Simplicity*, so that he wandered out of the right way, of his journey : but so sone as the sunne beganne to shine by the help of his dogge, he found his way againe. Now after they had trauailed thus many dayes, they came to a pleasant & delightful meadow, in the middest whereof was seated a princely Palace, called the house of *Charitie*, the Porter whereof was the *Loue of God*.

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## THE THIRD PART.

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### CHAPTER. I.

*Of the probation and exercise of the  
Loue of God.*



When *Desire* had beheld this goodly Palace, he rejoyced much, that his long wearisome and painefull journey, was come at last to so joyfull an end. Wherefore comming to the gates, and finding them locked : he beganne to call and knocke thereat. But not with-  
G j.
standing

ſtāding his calling & knocking, no man appeared that would giue him an anſwere. The ſpake *Simplicity*. And told him it were requiſite that he cryed lowder, for by that meanes he ſhould be hard, although they with in werē a ſleepe or elſe deafe, & bidde him take the two hammers: that hong at the gate, & preſently ſome would come, & open it for him. Theſe two hammers were called, the one *To ſigh*. The other *To cry*. Therefore ſhe bid him, knocke & cry a lowde for theſe dores, ſhould not be here if they were not to be opened, & therefore are theſe hammers hanged at them, that ſuch a ſhal knocke may be admitted in. Thus cōtinued *Deſire*, ſtil crying & knocking long, before the *Loue of God* would open the gate, neither did *Deſire* as yet know him, To whome the *Loue of God* at length ſpake as foloweth. What ſeek you here brother, or what lack you to knocke & call thus? peraduenture you are weary with your long expectation. But it is our cuſtome and manner to feigne our ſelfs deafe, therby to try their patiēce that come hither. And it chaunceth often, that when we ſee any wax weary & perſwade theſelues that the gate muſt be opened to them, ſo ſone as they come: we ſuffer them to depart even as they came, for none are admitted to enter hither that ſhall thinke themſelues worthily to deſerue the place, & that we ought to receiue them of right  
 and

and duety. Therefore tell me, art thou one of those? DE. No Sir, I am not. For notwithstanding I haue passed & ouercome many labours, yet am I sure, that I haue no way deserued to be admitted in here: but altogether vnworthy, except it shall please you to receaue me vpō your owne goodnes & mercy. LOVE.&c. What is the cause thou desirest to be admitted? or what seekest thou to find here within this house. DE. I am come sir hither from the house of *Humility* accompaned with these graue & honest companions, & haue passed my journey by the path of *Patience* Only to seeke the *Love of God*, who as it is told me dwelleth here within. LOVE.&c. Doeſt thou bring me no token whereby I may knowe that thou comest from the house of *Humility*. DE. I bring two tokens. The one wherof was giuen me in the house of *Humility*, and it is called, *Knowledge of my selfe*. The other haue I got my selfe in my journey, and that is called *Knowledge of God*. LOVE.&c. I am very well pleased to se thee so prouided, but yet tell mee this one thing, doeſt thou perswade thy selfe, that by reason of these two knowledges we ought of duety to receaue, and admit thee. DE. Be it farre frō me to haue such a thought. I desire to be receaued only through your grace and mercy. For I am not sure whither both these knowledges, wherwith I am instructed be

trulie written or no. This I know for certaine, that I continued sometime in the house of *Humility*, and there I learned and knewe the house, the Virgins, and their conditions, they themselves telling me. But whether I haue well digested the fruit I eate there, or whether they agree well with my stomacke, although they be sweete in taste, I confesse I knowe not, Neither am I sure whether I reaped any benefit by my journey. For often did I fall, the bushes and brambles oft pricked me, and in a manner I was drawne hither by force of my cōpanions. Therefore Sir, there is none of these things that I bring with me, that I can tell you any certainty of, but mine owne malice, vilenes, sloath, and imperfectiō. And amongst other things which cause me to come hither to seeke the *Loue of God*, one especiall cause is, that I vnderstand he is a singular good Chirurgion, of whome I desire to be purged, and to be let blood. And farther, men say, that with his only looke he presently discovereth the imperfections and faults in the hart, and whosoever he toucheth he doth presently cure. LOVE. &c. Why doest thou desire to be made so pure, and sound? DE. Because (as I haue learned of others) it is allowed to none to enter in hither that shal be vnclean, but to such as shall be only pure, sounde, and vndefiled. LOVE &c. Considering then, that  
thou

thou puttest thy whole trust and confidence in vs, stay here a while. For thou canst not enter in, or speake with the *Loue of God*, except first thou talke with a Boy of his: tarry here therefore, and I will call the Boy, who will direct thee what thou art to doe, and how thou maist come to the speach of his Master.

## CHAPTER. 2.

*Of the loue of our Neighbour.*

**H**ere *Desire* stayed, expecting greatly the comming of the Boy, that shoulde bring him in, to the speach of his Master: who presently came forth. His name was caled the *Loue of our Neighbour*, whome when *Desire* behelde, he could not through joyrefraine from weping for the exceeding great loue hee carried to his Master. LOVE &c. What is the cause that thou weepest thus, considering in this house all are chearefull and merry, and none is heard to weepe or lament? DE. Ioy, not sorrow maketh me to weepe. LOVE. &c. Who do you seeke for here? DE. The *Loue of God*. LOVE. &c. I am his Boy: therefore if thou seekest my master thou must first talke & be acquainted with me. For my M. maketh so great account of me, that he wil not speake with those that loue not me. DE. I most willingly would learne and knowe thy condicions, and for the loue of thy M. be acquainted with thee. LOVE &c. If thou

wouldest be admitted amongst the number of my friends. Thou must euery morning giue me in steed of my breakfast, a certaine sawce called *Humble thought*, & an other at noone, called *Humble speech*, & a third at euening, caled *Humble worke*. DE. Where shall I find out, or get these sawces? LOVE. *Humility* & her husband *holy Purpose* maketh the first, which is *Humble thought*, wher by she thinketh and esteemeth her selfe more vile, base, and inferiour than any other, and accounteth of her selfe no better then a labouring beast. This *holy Purpose* prepareth a certaine Electuary for *Humilitie*, called *Contēpt of our selfe*, & to make this sawce which we now speake of, an other hearbe is to be added, called *Good opiniō of our neighbour*, of which cōpoundes *humble thought* is made. And in all this prouince, is not a skilfuller man to make this sawce, then the forenamed husband of *Humilitie*, whome so soone as thou shalt get thy friend, he will instruct thee how to make this sawce. The other called *Humble speech* is made, & compounded of three other hearbes, which are, *Humilitie*, *Gentlenesse*, and *Affability*, which must be strowed with a fine powder called *Slownes*, and *Sparing*. The third which is *Humble worke*, is compounded of many herbes. The chiefe whereof, are *Chearefulnessse*, *Loue*, and *Diligence*. When thou shalt bring me these three sawces to eate, then shall our friendship and familiarity

miliarity be firme, and soone after will I bring thee to the speach of my M. *Desire* much delighted with this direction of this boy, said to him. DE. Considering you haue acquainted me with your condition & desire, I wil labour to make these sawces, & giue them to you. Thus *Desire* continued long in cōference with this Boy, treating & discoursing many matters with him, & began to be familiar with him, & deliivering to him, the fornamed sawce, at last he desired him to open the gate, that thereby he might haue accessse to his M. LOVE. Thy request is reasonable, considering thou doest what lyeth in thy power, stay but a little, I will goe call my M. and see if he will come forth to speake with thee.

## CHAPTER 3.

*Of the Love of God and our Neighbour, and of an other degree of love, and of the office and exercise thereof.*

**N**OW *Desire* began to thinke thus with him selfe, whether the *Love of God* would come forth to talke with him or no, considering he was so vile, miserable, & wretched & altogether unworthy, with whome so great a Lord shoulde voutsafe to talke: and whilst he was thus debating with himselfe, he perceaued one comming towards him, who asked him, what he would, or with whom he would speake. DE. Sir I seeke to speak with the *love of god* LO. I am he which so

soone as *Desire* heard, he fell to the ground, ha-  
 uing lost his strength. Then the *Loue of God* ta-  
 king him by the hand, raised him from the  
 ground which made *Desire* to weepe so abun-  
 dantly for joy, that hardly could he pronounce  
 any word. Whereat the *Loue of God* being ten-  
 der of hart, through the compassion he had of  
 him beganne to weepe also, noting the great  
 loue and good will which *Desire* had towardes  
 him, & said. LOVE. &c. Cease off to weepe,  
 for I cannot without griefe behold the teares of  
 him that loueth me; but tell me, who told thee  
 that I was abiding in this house? D E. A cer-  
 taine sheepeheard, that I mette on the way, who  
 directed me to this place, where I shold finde  
 you. LOVE. &c. What did he tell thee con-  
 cerning me? & what is the cause why thou lo-  
 uest me so greatly, and hast so great a desire to  
 finde me out? Is it because thou hast heard of  
 others, that I bestowe many great giftes on my  
 friendes, and vse to rewarde with greate bene-  
 fittes, such as serue and obey mee? D E. No.  
 But for this cause doe I loue you, because you  
 are, a good, a noble, and a famous Lord. And  
 because you bring your friendes and serrauntes  
 to the place where they may see, and beholde  
 God: then the which, there is no greater hap-  
 pineffe, and felicity in the world. The *Loue of*  
*god* hearing what *Desire* had said, was much ple  
 sed

fed to heare his holy purpose & intēt, & began to loue him now more then before, to whome *Desire* said, I cannot sufficiently meruaile my Lord, that you being so mighty and potent a Lord, and the Sonne of so great a King, admit such as follow, and seeke after you, to finde you with so great labour & difficulty. LOVE. &c. Doe not so. For this is a mistery not knowne to all men. For many there be that thinke they haue not found, or knowe not me : when not withstanding, I am neare vnto them, and then themselues abounde with me. And againe there be others that perswade themselues, that they haue found and obteyned me, when notwithstanding they be farre from me, and haue not the least knowledge, and vnderstanding of me. DE. I beseech you acquainte me with your conditions, and office that I may vnderstand whither I be neare or farre of from you, for I hould and esteeme of you, as of my Lord and friende. LOVE. &c. My office and duety is to loue God, for I am called the Sonne of the Knowledge of God. DE. How do you loue God? LOVE. &c. I haue a vehement desire to loue him with all my hart, with all my strength, and with all my power, and with asaying any thing, whereby I may feele him in such manner, as may please him, in referring all thinges to his honour, prayse, and glory, and  
the

the health and benefitte of mine owne soule. And likewise doe I wish, that the whole world may know & vnderstand him for his exceeding great goodnesse, and that all creatures may honour him, and yeeld him daily thanks. And I enforce my selfe with my earnest desire, that neither in great or small thinges, much or little I offend or displease him, or that I doe any thing contrary to his pleasure. And if through mine owne frailty and imbecillity I chaunce to offend him: I presently craue and aske forgiveness of him: and by that meanes our loue is repayred againe. And although my Lord and Master be so good, so noble, and so gracious to me: yet am I not content with this first steppe, and degree: but yet proceede farther, and according to my power and ability, endeouour to execute, not only what hee commandeth: but whatsoeuer the meanest in this Monastery, shall commaunde mee in his name. And this accustome I my selfe to doe, with all reuerence, denotion loue, joy, humility, and ready will: and that euer, in all places, and in euery good action. And hereby doe I knowe how greatly I loue him: when I doe that thing which hee commaundeth mee. For thus I perswade my selfe, that nothing in the worlde is so gratefull to him, (bee it to talke with him, doe him reuerence, or to shewe all  
ser-

seruice to him : as to doe that thing which either himselfe or someother shall command me in his name. For my Lord and Master saith thus to me. How thinkest thou that thy seruices can be acceptable to me, or that thou canst bee loued of mee, if thou doest not that which I shall commaund thee to doe ? Or how canst thou say thou louest me ? For this knowe for certaine, that in no other thing thou canst so vnite thy selfe to me, or conforme thy will so neare to mine, as if thou willingly and gladly execute what I commaund thee?

## CHAPTER. 4.

*The Loue of God proceedeth in his discourse.*

**I**N this degree of loue, I haue resolued with my selfe to performe whatsoeuer, I holde my selfe bound to, by my vocation and office. For since I first professed my selfe ( of which I neuer repent me) I holde my selfe by vow bound to performe that, which before I might either haue done or omitted. And for that cause I vse diligently to thinke vpon my duety and office, resoluing, and determining still with my selfe, to execute and discharge, whatsoeuer I am bound to by vertue of it, according to the direction of holy write, and learned men. Being most assured, that many offende through ignorance of that, which they are bound

to by duty. And if they know what they ought to doe: and yet neglect and omit it; then is their offence farre greater and more grieuous: for then they offend through malice, and not ignorance. Farther such thinges as I haue vowed & promised to do (which to performe I am bound by duety) those with all my endeouours, I labour to execute. And I haue promised and vndertaken to my Lord and Master, to keepe for euer the faith, I haue giuen to three Virgins which abide & dwell in this Monastery, which are *Obedience, Chastity, & Pouerty*, which three he hath giuen and assigned me as wiues, therefore morning and euening, I consider with my selfe, how that day following I may best serue and please them. Saying to my soule. Let me se now my soule, how thou wilt endeavour with thy selfe this day to obey, and please these Virgins, and at night, shew me my soule how thou hast performed this day, what thou didest promise to doe towards these Virgins, & whither thou hast grieued or offended any of them. Thus doe I still endeavour, to shewe my selfe a faithfull seruant to them. DE. Wherefore do you thus? LOVE. &c. Because these be the chamber-keepers of my Lord and Master, and none are admitted or can talke with him, except these Virgins procure him entrance. DE. Tell me I pray you, what spirituall exercises

ercises haue you, whereby you serue and keepe  
promisse with these Virgins. LOVE. &c.

Three things I propounde, and determine to  
my self, which night & day I offer vp to them,  
and which constrayne me to serue, and be obe-  
dient to them. The first is called, *To aske or de-  
mand nothing.* The second, *To couet or desire no-  
thing.* The third. *To thinke on nothing.* This first  
Purpose of mine serueth Obedience if so be, it be  
seasoned with a sawce, called *To doe*, and then  
may you cal it *to aske to do nothing.* With which  
foode Obedience is susteyned, & by how much  
more abundantly and purely I offer this vp, by  
so much the more am I in grace, & fauour with  
my Lord, & the greater affection doth he car-  
ry to me. This selfe same foode, called *To aske*,  
if I season it with another sawce, called *To haue*  
is called, *To aske or desire to haue nothing*,  
and with that doe I feede the second Virgin,  
called Pouerty. DE. Stay here a while, I pray  
you. May I not aske to haue any thing that I  
want, and haue neede of? LOVE. &c. No,  
except the thing, you desire be most needfull.  
For if there be any thing necessary for thee to  
haue, thou hast thy Superiour, who by himselve  
or his Officiall shall provide for thee, that thou  
needest not aske, what thou mayest not lawfully  
aske. For he whose charge it is to looke to  
the whole house : will provide necessities for  
all

all as it becommeth the Superiour, to the intent they may more freely serue GOD and attend their spirituall meditations, neither shall there be neede that any aske or craue such things as be necessary for them. And it shall be no little fault in the Superiour to want that discretion, as not to giue things necessary for those vnder his charge except they demāde them. Therefore that which I said of asking or demanding, ought to be doubly vnderstoode; that without offending one may aske, if such things as shall bee necessary, bee not giuen without asking, which thing may justly be reprehended, especially in Religious persons, and if it be a thing of great necessity, and not rather to satisfie our contentement. For in asking otherwise it may proceede from superfluity, curiosity or some other temptation. And assure thy selfe that vnder a colour of necessity, many vices are often couered, especially in thinges that appertayne to the sustinance of the body as meate, drinke, cloathing, and such like. DE. How shall I know whither, that which I desire proceede of necessity or rather to satisfie my contentement. LOVE. &c. If thou maist forbear that which thou askest, and if thou canst liue without it, and art not constraigned to suffer some great or notable hurt in thy body or thy soule, which may hap to thee in not asking. For if thou shalt bee  
sure

sure in not flattering thy self that in not asking, some great perill or danger may happē to thee, then not to aske is a great offence, and to aske, a merit if thou referre it to God. But if thou maist conueniently liue without that, which thou askest, and endure no great hurt or danger thereby, admit thou suffer some labour or grieve in forbearing it, provided still thou excede not the boundes of discretion; in this case not to aske, although that which thou askest be some what needefull, it shall be a great merit to thee, & a token of thy vertue, although without offending thou maist aske as I haue said. For happy in my opinion is the man that suffereth any thing for the *Love of God*. But if that which thou wilt aske be but such a thing, which without hurt of thy body or soule thou maist easely misse: thou maist thinke then, that to aske is but to satisfie thy minde and pleasure, although it be couered with a pretext of some holy purpose. For sinne doth not alwais shew, it selfe openly, but is shadowed often with a colour of holines. And thus maist thou knowe if thou askest any thing, whether it proceede of necessity or an vnstatisfied will. And least thou be deceaued through they partiall Iudgement, it will be necessary for thee, to keepe a diligent watch ouer thy selfe, and to bee exercised in vertue. Which if thou doest not,  
it will

it will be good, that thou be ordered by the ad-  
uise of discret men, and holy Scripture.

## CHAPTER. 5.

*Of the other two Purposes of the Loue of  
God, to wit To desire nothing, and  
To thinke on nothing.*

**L**OVE. &c. hauing breefly explayned my  
first *Purpose*, wherewith the first two Vir-  
gins, *Obedience & Pouerty*, are as I haue said be-  
fore nourished, I must shew and declare to thee  
the cōditions of the other two, *To desire nothing*,  
and *To thinke nothing*. Know therefore for most  
certayne that this former *Purpose to aske nothing*,  
is grounded vpon the second, *To desire nothing*.  
For it is most certaine that, *To haue*, proceedeth  
only from *To desire*. Then the cause takē away,  
which is *To desire*; the effect fayleth, which is  
*To aske*. And by that is effected that which is  
contrary to this, which is *Not to aske*. This is  
the other *Purpose* wherewith *Chastity* is nourish-  
ed, which is the third Virgin, whose office is,  
*To desire no worldly or carnall thing*. But because  
this herbe hath an other roote, from whence it  
springeth, which is *To thinke on nothing*, (for the  
thing cannot bee desired, which is not first  
thought on) I adjoyne a third *Purpose*, which  
is *To thinke nothing*. But in this place *To thinke*,  
must be vnderstood of that *Thought*, which is  
perseuerant & settled, with a consent & liking  
of

of reason and will. For to thinke nothing, doth not consist in the power of man. But it resteth in man not to continue, or perseuer in ill thoughts: but sone to collect himselfe, and to turne to God. Now when this herbe *To thinke*, is watered with the water, called to *See*. Wee must then adde to these holy *Purposes* a certayne powder, that is called. *Strict garde of our eyes*. For this is most necessary. These three *Purposes*, doe not only purge and make cleane my soule from all worldly affares, from al selfe-will, and from all spot and stayne: but besides (that I may with greater zeale serue my Lord God) procure me great purity of hart, & ridde me of all priuate affection and loue, and joyne, and vnite me wholly to my Lord God and Satiour. And to these three *Purposes* I haue reduced all my other spirituall exercises, as well those which are appertayning to *Humility*: as such as are agreable to al other vertues, because I knowe, perfection to consist in them. And suffer not thy selfe to bee perswaded that in vayne, I yeeld obedience to these three Virgins, for I finde their fauour and goodnes, great towards me, who plentifully bestow on me all kinde of goodnes. The one of them called, *Poverty*, hath lately bestowed on me a rich ornament. **DE.** I desire to see it, where doe you keepe it? **LOVE.** &c. I keepe it in two  
H j. places,

places, in my hart, and in my chamber. And it is so great, and of so high estimation, that I could not possibly keepe it in my hart, vntill I banished, and vtterly excluded thence, all worldly loue, affection, and desire: neyther could it possibly be conteyned in my chamber vntill I had cast thence all superfluous thinges, reseruing only the *Crucifix*, and some few other bookes. DE. What is the name of this ornament? It is called *Nothing at all*, and it is the especiall and chiefeft treasure of *Pouerty* who is the richest Lady of all the world, and who possesseth so much treasure, as her self doth desire.

## CHAPTER. 6.

*Of the office of the Loue of God, and of prayer in the same degree.*

**I**N this foresaid office of *Loue*, which is to doe that which my Lord and Master commaundeth, and my duty bindeth me to I must vse a certaine condition or circumstance, which is, that if at any time according to my office and place I am set in (as being attendant in his chamber) I come vnto him, either to doe him seruice, or to craue something of him, or else to to speake to him; I endeouour to shew and present my selfe, with as great purity and humility of hart, as I can. For by how much clearer in hart I present my selfe to him, by so much more clearenesse I see and beholde him.

And

And I accustome to craue the fellowshippe of my Brother the Feare of God, that he with an Aunte of mine, called *Reuerence*, woulde goe also with me. D E. What is the reason you take *Reuerence* with you? LOVE. &c. I weigh and consider with my selfe who I am, and who my Lord and Master is. I think vpon his most sacred Majesty, who of right, and desert, ought to be reuerenced, and feared as one most worthy of all honour, and loue. Farther, I vse to contemplate how al the blessed soules fall prostrate before him, adore him, and praise him, and that by admiring, and praying his so great and excellent goodnes and Majesty, they be rauished, and in a sort transformed into God himselfe. Yet farther, I am wont to consider, how my hart, thought, wil, & purpose, or intent is laide open before him, and how he seeth, and knoweth my secrets, better then my selfe. Also how according to the pleasure of his diuine holy will, he is able to doe, alter, establissh, and abolish all things: and how life and death, being and not being, the saluation, or damnation of the whole world, is in his hands. I farther meditate with my selfe, how he is wholly and all good: & the chifest, highest, & purest goodnes it self, which contēplating rightly, I oft tremble in hart, feare, & almost faint: especially beholding my self, so wicked, so vile, so abhominable

and so filthy a sinner, to presume, to speake to a Lord of so great Majestie, & that he will admit me to come to him, speake with him, and eate with him, as though I were vnited in great friendship with him. Often doe I vse this or like speech to him. What neede hast thou, O my Lord and Master that such sinners as my selfe, should present themselues before thee? Is it seemely, O my Lord, that such vnworthy persons should presume to serue or attend on thee? where is the honor and reuerence, that is due to thy Princely Majesty. DE. What answer do you receaue againe from him? LOV. I cannot certaynely tell thee, sauing that he makes me weepe for joy, and sayeth. Care not thou much for that, let not this thing trouble thee, considering thou hast not of thy selfe procured this place, nor intruded into it, but art called to it, and chosen by mee. My selfe best knoweth why I haue placed thee in it. Let thy only care be, diligently to discharge thy office, and with thy vttermost power to performe, what thy duety bindeth thee to, in the place thou art appointed, and then take thou care for no other matter. DE. What say you to him, when you come before him, accompanied with your associates *Humility, Feare, and Reuerence?* LOVE. &c. First I dispatch those prayers, and diuine seruice which this order of life, my  
vowe,

vowe, and profession binde me to, and that not sadly or vnwillingly, or only for necessity : but with as great attention , deuotion , diligence, willingnes, chearefulnes, & reuerence as I can. And although I be bounde of necessity to such prayers . Yet chaunge I my necessity into a ready will ; and most joyfully performe what I am bound to doe . Then , that I may craue something of him, and may moue him to graunt it me ; I endeuour with all my power to prayse and laude him, and cease not to honour him, assuring my selfe that, that is acceptable to him. And in praying him, I desire his miraculous workes which he hath done , pleasing and delighting my selfe in remembring them , and exercise my selfe in telling his mighty power, high wisdome and exceeding goodnes . And farther I rehearse the great grace & large bounties , which he bestoweth on his souldiers and seruants, honouring and exalting him for the same . Neither passe I in silence his exceeding great mercy , which he euer hath and still doth shewe towards his enemies , and am much amazed at his gentlenesse and clemencie . That not only he doth not reuenge himself on them : but besides bestoweth great rewardes vppon them. Besides I render great thanks to him for the great goodnes, which is in himselfe, and recyte and number his vertues , and renowne his

beauty, wisdom & exceeding goodnes, praying him for them, and rejoycing, and triumphing that he is so exceeding great and good. And this doe I often, knowing sufficiently his will herein, and not doubting, but that it is acceptable to him, and that it is his pleasure that man should be conuersant with himselfe, that is with God, and conferre with him of pleasant, joyfull and secret misteries: whereof they are ignorant, that be carelesse thereof, and will not enter into his secret chamber with him, although they be in his house, and attend vpon him. DE. Wherefore doe you prayse him with all these high titles? LOVE. &c. Because the more I extoll, commend, and prayse him, the more I displease, despise, and set at nought my selfe: which how acceptable it is to him, cannot be declared with tongue. And this is his will & pleasure, that we continually haue set before our eyes his goodnes, his excellency, and his infinite greatnes: and our owne malice, our basenes, and exceeding misery. And farther I am certayne that I cannot be deceaued, although I prayse and honour him all that is in my power: for he is farre more noble, more excellent, more potent, and greater, then either I or all creatures together, both Angelicall and humane can comprehend with thought.

## CHAPTER. 7.

*Of the office of the Lowe of God, in an other degree,  
and a continuacion of that, which he beganne  
to declare, of the manner of praying.*

**L**OVE. &c. After that I haue endeououred to prayse, and exalt him with the vttermoſt of my power, I offer vp to him my whole minde and will, with a chiefe *Purpose* that I haue, that for no worldly thing I would offend or displeaſe him: and alſo moſt earneſtly I entreate him, that it may pleaſe him to keepe and preferue me in this will and minde, conſidering that without him, I am no way able to doe it. Then aſke I forgiuenes of him, for all the offences and iniuries I haue done vnto him, and beſeech him that he will permit me to thinke vpon, vnderſtand, or loue nothing but himſelf. And yet farther I deſire of him, that conſidering he hath voutſafed to admit me for his ſeruant and friend, & that into a place of ſo high a function: that it will pleaſe him to beſtowe on mee the holy ſpirit of *Humility*: which may withdrawe and turne away my minde, from all things diſpleaſing, and hatefull to him, that my ſeruice be not hatefull but acceptable to him. Alſo I craue of him that he will beſtow on me ſuch things as he knoweth, I ſtand in neede of, whither they bee ſuch thinges as are neceſſary for me, or ſuch as for his honour and pleaſure,

he will haue me endued with : and that , for no other cause, but that he would suffer me to liue and die in him , and not cast me from his sight according to my desert . After this I pray for all those that I loue most , and to whome either spiritually or corporally I hold my selfe bound for all this society , and for all liuing creatures, that it will please him to bestowe his grace and mercy on them ; that according to their duties , they may knowe him , loue him , honour , prayse , and worshippe him . All this doe I labour to present to him , with sincerity and purity of hart . D E. How doest thou present thy selfe before him with this purity of heart ? **LOVE.** &c. As neare as I can , I keepe a watch ouer my hart and minde , and take a care to my soule , restrayning as much as I may all my senses , and continually setting before my selfe playne simplicity , which doth interpret to the best whatsoeuer I behold . And if I would bee free and secure from all feare : then doe I remayne and abide with my Lord and Master , with whome to be present , and to talke and conferre , and whose counsaill and aduice to demand , is my chiefe good and joy , my only will and comfort . Neither can I enjoy peace , quiet , or security , or finde anie manner of contentement , or ease , but only when I am present in his company . And for this cause  
haue

haue I determined with my selfe, to forsake all worldly pleasures, and to dwell with him, and cleaue to him, neuer to depart from him except hee shall command mee. DE. Yet I thinke it very necessary sometimes to be busied in reading good bookes. LOVE. &c. True it is, it is good to spend some time in reading, but not with a minde to become learned and skilfull, but that thereby thou maist finde out GOD and his wayes, and once hauing found him, maist knowe and loue him. For this I shall not neede many bookes. This one thing I looke after, will, and desire, that I may settle and fix my whole loue on GOD, and may joyne all my affection, reason, and vnderstanding to him. For his loue alone is sufficient for me, he will teach me all thinges that shall be conuenient for me to knowe, and can open and discouer more secrets and misteries to mee, how I shall loue and not offend him, then all the books that the whole world doth possesse. And I obtayne greater purity of soule; feare, deuotion, reuerence, compunction, fortitude and strength, and seuerity against the flesh, by being in his presence, then by reading continually. Besides I know for certayne, hee neuer will aske account how much I haue reade: but how much I haue loued and esteemed him. Neither would I altogether

together exclude or banish reading, especially for such as are yet simple and ignorant, and knowe not howe to iudge of their thoughts, wordes, and workes. For to such it is requisite to spend much time in reading, & to learne the exercises of the spirit & minde. For as it would be thought great follie, rashnes, and disgrace to a Prince, if a rude country fellow not accustomed to speake to a King, should presume in the presence of all his nobility to come, and bouldly speake his minde, and if in speaking he should vse his accustomed, rusticall and vndecent termes, it could not but be thought so great a disgrace to the Prince, that he iustly might commaund him to be thrust out from his presence and farre better had it beene, he had neuer presumed thither, euen so standeth the case in spirituall cases. But to those that by reading, and hearing, haue alredy attayned to the knowledg of God, and diuine exercises, to such, the exercise of praying is more necessary then reading, as being alredy expert how to behaue themselves in the spirituall Court. Farther when I present my selfe, before my Lord and Master. I am very carefull, that inconstantly I turne not my head or eyes, hither or thither. For it would be taken a great dishonour to him, to looke an other way, whilest on should talke with him. DE. Tell me your meaning more plaine-

plainely for as yet I vnderstand not. **LOVE.** When I speake to my Master, if at such time I busie my thoughts, and reason vpon anie thing but only vpon him I speake to: then turne I my backe not my face to him. For this cause when I perswade my selfe, that I am present before him in sight, and that he doth behold me, and neuer turneth his eyes from me, but marketh what I say: I vse all reuerence, deuotion, loue and attention to him that I can. Then doe I prayse and thanke him for all his benefits bestowed on mee, and all other his creatures, calling them often to my minde, and rehearsing them, being most certayne that he would not haue me in-grate and vnmindefull of his giftes.

## CHAPTER. 8.

*Of the third degree  
of Loue.*

**LOVE.** &c. Now although I haue shewed the first degree, or steppe, of my loue, which is to loue my Lord and Master, and neuer to offend him: and also the second, which is to performe and put in praetise all his commandements: yet doe I not content my selfe herewith, in regarde my loue is so great to him, but that I adde yet a third degree, or steppe to his loue, which is to doe all those thinges that

that I knowe are pleasing to him, or whatsoever I can imagine he would I should doe. D E. How knowe you, that you doe those things that please him? L O V E. &c. There be two things whereby I may knowe that easely: which are, if I loue that which he loueth, and likewise hate, what is hatefull to him. Concerning the first, which is, to loue what he loueth: I loue his Sonne, the most beautifull, sweete, and noble, of all that euer were, and most like his Father, and so obedient to him, as neuer was, or shall be Sonne more obedient to a Father. Whome the Father loueth euen as himselfe, because he is more like to him, then euer Sonne vvas to a Father. And so greate is the loue and vnion which is betweene them, that they two be but one; of one will, like power, and the selfe same knowledge. Who although they be distinct in persons, yet are they both one in essence. For this Sonne, the Father hath made a garment with the handes of his goodnes, like to that which Sheepearde doe weare, which the Sonne hauing put on, departed out of the priuy Chamber of his princely Father, and yet for euer remayneth with him. And thus he liueth here in this Monastery, and conuerseth with vs. For otherwise we could not behold him. Moreouer when his Father would send him  
ouer

ouer all the world, cladde with this garment, & a little traueling scrippe : he entred also into this desert, to seeke out his sheepe that were wandered and strayed. And as hee trauailed through this desert, the Father permitted that he should be killed of wolues, and deuoured of dogs, and would giue him no helpe although he could: but would haue him endure a most cruell death by these wolues, more painefull to him, then euer any suffered, being his flesh most tender, in that he was the Son of a King. All this did our Lord of his exceeding loue to-wardes vs, that all we that dwell and abide in his house, might know, and trie his charity, and thereby might loue him againe, considering that first he loued vs so greatly, that he spared not his one only Son, but deliuered him to die for the loue he bare to vs al. Whilest the *Loue of God.* was relating this discourse, *Desire* being wholly wounded to the hart could not refraine from vehement weeping. But the *Loue of God* going on with his discourse, said farther. And although God the Father hath suffered his Son to be killed, yet notwithstanding he loueth him so exceedingly, that by his great omnipotency, he soone rayfed him from death, much more beautifull, and gloriously triumphing, bringing with him, the sheepe which he came to seeke others being left in this wildernesse, that they might

might be fedde and become fat with the knowledge of him, he hauing a perpetual and watchfull care ouer them. So at length returning againe to his Princely Father, he sitteth nowe on his right hand, speaking and making intercession for vs al, being ouercome with to great a loue towards vs. For I am of this opinion, that except we were spared for his sake, long since had we beene driuen cleane out of this Monasterie: so wicked and miserable we are, and so negligently, and sloathfully wee serue him, wholly forgette him and contemne him, and so little care and remembrance we haue of him. But the Omnipotēt father loueth this Son so greatly; that in my opinion nothing can be more acceptable to him in this world, then that we should loue this, his Sonne with him. For which cause I endeouour & labour to loue him, & to do those thinges which I thinke pleasing to him. D E. What is it, that you can doe acceptable to him? LOVE. &c In remembring and speaking of his most holy life, his paines & laboures, his most bitter death and Passion, & his holy commandements, and as neare as I can conforming my self according to his manners. For who soeuer my Lord & Master seeth most carefully to imitate the life of his Son, him doth he most loue, and holde deare to him. And for this cause, was it his holy will and pleasure, that he

he should come & liue here amongst vs, that by that meanes he might teach vs how we should liue, who before liued no better then brute beasts. Therefore hath our Lord set him before our eyes, as a mirrour, or looking glasse, that e- uery one may knowe, whether he doe, or omit what his pleasure is, and may see and behold in the life of his Sonne, as in a glasse, whether his works be good or badde. Neither is there any thing in all the world, by which we may more trulie come to the knowledge thereof. And yet, besides this, there is one thing more, which my Lord and M. loueth, that is my Boy, called *the loue of our Neighbour*, whome he esteemeth so much, and holdeth so deare, that whatsoeuer we doe to him, be it good or bad, he taketh as if it were done to himselfe. DE. How doe you loue this Boy? LOVE. &c. Euen as my selfe. And first I perswade my selfe that he is better then I am, and although I execute a higher place, yet in all thinges that are agree- able to vertue, I obey him. I farther am care- full that by no meanes I afflict him, or giue him occasion of sorrowe, but shewe all loue and kindnesse to him that I can. I neuer haue sinister conceite of him, but rather excuse him all that I may. I neuer call him by anie name of disgrace. I most willingly dissemble, and hide his naturall defectes and imperfections.

In distresse and aduersitie, I lament and bewaile him. In his absence I detract him not, neither suffer others to doe if I may hinder it. I wish and desire, that my Lord and Master be better beloued of him, then of my selfe: and that it would please God to make him as good, or better then I my selfe am. I enuie him nothing either for corporall or spirituall giftes bestow- ed on him by God, or for any thing which he enjoyeth in this world, but rejoyce in his prosper- ity, and lament in his aduersity. Farther, I thinke him to be the Angell of God; and my selfe to be vnworthy to be his seruant. This doe I, for that I knowe him to be beloued of my Master. Also I loue those things vvhich appertaine to our societie, towards which, I carry a very great zeale, in regarde that they appertaine to the worshippe, & honour of my Lord and Master, and to the preservation and maintenance of this his house. Wherefore I am very carefull, that nothing be lost, or mis- layed, especially of those things which belong to the seruice of Religion, Ceremonies, and the holy Canons of the Church. Which thinges although many doe not greatly esteeme, yet I am fully perswaded, that the holy Ghost would neuer haue instituted them, except hee had knowne them to be pleasing to God. There- fore I holde the smallest Ceremonies, to be ob- served

serued, imagining they tend to the honour of God, and most readely and willingly, with all humility, & reuerence doe I keepe them. And this thought doe I still carry in my minde, if I should not honour my Lord and Master, worshippinge him carefully, serue him dutifully, and shewe my selfe most zealous in his seruice, who should doe it? considering I am beholding to him, more then all other creatures. For if the seruants and attendants of great Princes and States serue and obey their Masters, so carefully, diligently, and with so great a desire; why should not I serue and honour my Master and Lord, that admitteth me to the familiarity of his chamber. Therefore if the whole world should fall, and decline from his obedience, and not one should perseuer to shewe him reuerence: yet woulde I remayne faithfull, euen vntill my last moment of life.

## CHAPTER. 9.

*Of those things which the Loue of God hateth,  
and a conclusion of his dutie and office.*

**T**He other thing of the two, which I spake of before, wherewith I please and content my Lord & Master, is, to hate such things as I knowe he hateth. And two especiall enemies I knowe my Master hath, which are *The world*, and *My flesh*. Wherefore I haue resolved with my selfe, to hate them all, that I can,

& to haue neither friendship or peace with the which determinatiō to performe, I purpose an other thing, which is, to take no delight or recreation with the, neuer to talke or conuerse familiarly with the, except it be by the cōmandement of my M. which cōmandement is of more weight, the any *Purpose* I can vndertake. Therefore haue I besought the Superior of this Monastery, that he neuer send me abroad, into town or contry for my recreatiō, or disport, which is a thing different frō my disposition, & which I hate: yet when he cōmandeth it, I must needs obey him. And although for some causes my M. command me somtimes to goe abroad into the world, yet will he that I returne with all the speed that I can make, for feare lest I be caught and deceaued with the deceites thereof: being assured, that how warely soeuer men conuerse therein, yet more hurt than good commeth euer thereby. Likewise do I detest & hate my owne faultes and vncleanes, my il motions & desires, my sodaine passions & promise to sin, not ignorant how hatefull they be to my Lord and M. And therefore for the loue of him, I continually labor to amend my selfe. Besides I sequester my selfe from all that dwell in this Monastery (for his loue) except when charity & necessitie require the cōtrary. Neither doe I it for that cause that I contemne them, or thinke them unworthy

thy of my company & fellowship (for as I said before, I esteeme them as Saints and Angelles) but rather because I thinke my selfe vnworthy of their presence and conuersation, or meete to kisse the ground that they treade on. DE. Why do you so? LO. Because in these times Religio is much decayed, by reason of to much familiarity, and conuersing of such as profes monastical liues, not only amongst themselves, but also amongst secular persons. Whereby it chanceth that so little prayer, deuotion and meditation is vsed. For in these daies some Monasteries are become like Princes Palaces, and only in name & habit they shew themselves religious: when they treat of, and handle naught, but worldly causes: & holines & religion is so rare amongst some of the, that they neuer frequent their deuotions, but when they meet in their *Oratories*, out of which they talke of nothing, but worldly buisnesses, and newes, being alwaies so distracted, that they know not how to collect their minds to serue God: and when they are called against their wils to their *Oratories*, to sing their seruice they feare they shall not soone enough depart from thence againe: & thus they sing their seruice being full of high misteries, with litle reuerence or no deuotio at al, hauing their minds & desire on the end, & in the kitchen. And beause they vnderstand litle of God, or what appertayneth

to him : God likewise regardeth them not, but hateth them. Therefore haue I determined to inure my selfe to a custome, and to endeavour to be alwaies solitary, and attend my deuotions that so my minde may take delight in God, and those thinges that appertaine to him, and that I may learne to loue him, as in truth it is most requisite, considering that for that cause I haue forsaken the world, & withdrawne my self hither. DE. Some will say thou art singular, & wil note thee for it. LOVE. I regard not that, for I ought not desire to please men: especially whē it shall displease and offend God. And so long as I am not scandalous to others, let them think or speake their pleasures of me. That which I doe, is but my office, and dutie, if therfore thou seeke me, doe thou as I haue done.

## CHAPTER. 10.

*The Loue of God brought desire into the house.*

**I**N this meane time Desire was much amazed, and bethought himselfe of those thinges which he had heard of the *Loue of God*, and said to him. DE. When you haue done all these thinges, is there cause that you shoulde be in feare of any thing? LOVE. &c. Yea trulie. I must with great care and studie endeavour, that by doing well I fall not into vaine-glory, and selfe liking. For if so I should yeeld to them, presently my Master would expel me  
this

this Monastery. Therefore haue I alwaies *Humilny* my Mother by my side. DE. Carry me I beseech you into the house. LOVE. Followe me, for thou hast had conference enough with me. I will bring thee vnto an other fellowe of mine, whose office is higher, and more worthy then mine. DE. What is his name? LOVE. He is called *Desire of God*. Now *Desire* vvent with a chearefull minde, accompanied with the *Loue of God*, to seeke *Desire of God*, and hauing founde him, he asked of him if he were *Desire of God*. DESIRE OF GOD. I am hee thou seekest, what wouldest thou with me DE. I would intreat to be admitted to your seruice. Here *Desire of God* was delighted with the readie will of *Desire*, and said to him. DESIRE OF GOD. If thou desire to liue with me, thou must be wel instructed by my brother the *Loue of God*. For *Desire of God* is made of the wine that runneth out of that vessell of the *Loue of God*. See therefore thou be first well instructed by the *loue of God*, least otherwise thou deceaue thy selfe. DE. I haue conuersed sometime with the *Loue of God*, who hath instructed me of all things that are necessary for me to doe. Which I hope through Gods helpe, to be able to execute. But I cannot assure you, making no doubt whether I am endued with the *Loue of God* or no, considering it is a thing known only to him

I iij.

selfe,

selfe, who loue, or doe not loue him. Therefore  
 herein I humble my selfe to his wisdome. Nei-  
 ther can I assure you, I haue any thing of my  
 selfe, one thing excepted which is *Goodwill* my  
 dogge, whome neither, I dare presume to cha-  
 llenge as my owne, considering I haue him by  
 the giste of an other. These wordes of *Desire*,  
 pleased *Desire of God*, the rather considering, he  
 perceaued that *Desire* durst not attribute to him  
 self his loue of God. DE. Now Sir, let me craue  
 to knowe your conditions & office. DESIRE.  
 Euen as a man through true knowledge of him  
 selfe, attayneth to great contempt, and hatred of  
 himselfe, & as through true knowledge of God  
 a man likewise cometh to perfect loue of God.  
 So by much louing of God, a man is brought to  
 the greater desire of God. And whosoever he  
 be that getteth me: he desireth nothing els that  
 this world can yeeld. For with such vertue and  
 worthines doe I adorne his minde: that he thin-  
 keth himselfe vnmeete, to desire any thing, be-  
 sides that most excellent, most rare, & most to  
 be desired good. Which is only our Lord Ie-  
 sus Christ. I say, I make him the most excellent  
 of the world. For although he be borne but of  
 meane parentage: yet do I make him a mighty  
 King. For whosoever is trulie endued with me,  
 he thinketh on nothing but only on God: he  
 speaketh nothing but only on God: because  
 that whersoeuer his treasure is, there he setteth

his hart. And whatsoeuer the hart profoundly thinketh, that especially the mouth vttereth. And those things which are deliuered by the consent of the mouth, apparantly declare the thought of the hart. I am the foode and repast of that minde, which liueth, and is nourished by good desire: in this house of *Charitie*, I am of highest dignity, and keepe the dore of the secret chamber of the foresaid *Charity*, and haue authority to admit such friendes as I allowe of. Here vse I the office of a Cryer, or a Trumpeter, and walking about this Monastery, make certaine cries and soundes, vntill such time as I awake and stirre vp my Master, and cause him to come forth to speake with such as seek him. Who doest thou thinke awaked me euen now, when thou stoodest calling so long at the gate, & knockedst with the hammers of teares, and sighes? truly the barking of thy dog. I am the truest messenger of *Charitie* & come first to the gate, speak first to my M.<sup>an</sup> nearest to him, & am soonest heard of him. Farther, it is in me to distribute the fruit of a most rare tree, which we haue, called the *sight of God* &, I do giue it to others to eate. DE. Is this fruit plesant in tast. For in the house of *Humilitie* an other fruit was giuen me, most bitter to eate, especially at the first it coulde hardly be swallowed. DESIRE. OF GOD. This fruit is most sweete, yet far

sweeter in the tast of some men, then of others, according as men are more desirous and hungry after it, & as they haue their tast & mouthes most perfect. Some there be whose teeth are but dul or blunt: with whome this fruit agreeth not, because they cannot hold it. Other some eate it without hunger or appetite; hauing their stomakes ful & ouercharged with other meates; to these men likewise it tasteth not pleasantly, neither is it lightly digested of them, yet neuer thelesse it doth not hurt them. Some others there be, which by reason of some ague or some immoderate heate haue not their tast so good as others, and these cannot judge the goodnes of this fruit, but only according as they shall heare by others. DE. I beseech you, giue me leaue to tast a little of this fruit. DESIRE OF GOD. It pleaseth me that thou sayest to tast a little thereof: for in this mortall life no man may eate thereof his fill: only he may tast and trie how sweete it is. DE. Why so? DESIRE OF GOD. If any man might enjoy it here to the full of his desire, he would neuer desire to depart from this world, and to goe to heauen. Know therefore that liuing here in this vale of misery, almost dead through hunger, and deprived of strength, by reason of long penury: we ought longly to watch and desire that day, wherein we may enter, into that great supper  
of

of our King and Master, desiring and thirsting after him in no other manner, then doth the hart thirst for the cleare fountaine in the hottest Sömer. And such is the vertue and force of this fruit, that one little morsell be it neuer so small doth satiate a mans stomacke, bee hee neuer so great an eater. But being once come to the presence of this King and Master, hee will make our stomacke better and stronger, that wee shall bee able to eate of this fruit, so much as we will, and neuer receaue hurt or preiudice by it. But here if any one eate more of it, then his stomacke can beare: he shall rather receaue hurt then good thereby. Therefore must we moderately eate of this fruit, vntill we arrive at that place of happines, where for euer we shall be filled without all measure, with that same fruit which here we doe but only taste.

## CHAPTER II.

*How Desire of God prepared, Desire to  
eate of this fruit.*

**D**E. Now then Sir, I beseech you bestowe vpon me to eate so much of this fruit, as your selfe shall thinke good. **DESIRE OF GOD.** First then considering, this fruit is not conteyned, but in a most cleane vessell: it behooueth that thou clense and make cleane thy teeth, and that thou wash thy mouth, thy eyes, thy face, thy handes and feete. **DE.** Where  
may

may I finde water, wherwith to do it: **DESIRE OF GOD.** I will bring thee to a living fountayne, that continually runneth both night and day, called *Holie Religion*, also I will assemble the Virgins of this Monastery, who shall assist to wash and purifie thee. This much contented *Desire*, and gladly did he expect the coming of these Virgins, when behould he sawe *Desire of GOD*, come and bring them with him, saying, these be the Virgins that shall wash thee. The first is called *Sweetnes*. The second *Concord*. The third *Pitty or Compassion*. The fourth *Grace*. The fift *Clemencie*. The sixt *Indulgence*. The seuenth *Mercy*. The eight *Beneuolence*. The ninth *Gentlenes*. The tenth *Sufferance*. The eleuenth *Tranquility*. The twelwe *Securntie*. The thirteenth *lov*. The fourteenth *Discretion or Moderation*. The fiftenth *Denotion*. Who will giue thee a certayne sawce, that shall procure thee an appetite, whereby more willingly & pleasingly thou shalt eat this fruit. For it is only giuen to such a hunger after it, but others are sent away empty without it. The sixteenth Virgin is *Religion*. The seuenth is *Perseuerance*. The eightenth is *Prayer*. The ninenth is *Honestie*, and my selfe *Desire of God*, am the last, who am euer present at this holy Monastery of Virgins. And if thou wilt likewise associate thy selfe with them, it will  
prepare

prepare thee not a little to eate this fruit, which so sone as thou hast eaten, thou shalt euer after haue these Virgins thy companions, who neuer will forsake thee, except thou first abandon them. For they be very greedy to eate of this meate, and so sone as they espie this fruit. They flie to it, as bees will doe to honny, and we cannot better knowe when a man hath this fruit, then if we see these Virgins flocking about his gates. Now *Desire* being washed and well recreated with eating this fruit, was wonderfully comforted, to whome *Desire of God* said, considering Brother that thou hast eaten of this fruit, it is now expedient that thou doe sing also. For the seruants of GOD, after they haue eate their meate vse to sing, giuing thanks and prayse to GOD, and none abideth in this house, that is not expert in singing. DE. After what manner shall I sing? **DESIRE OF GOD.** Wee will goe to the quyer where all the singers abide. The first is called, *Benediction or Blessing*. The second Honour. The third *Praying*. The fourth *Thankesgiuing*, amongst these must thou sing, who are excellent Musitions, and haue singular sweete voyces. DE. What part must I sing? **DESIRE OF GOD.** The first as I haue said is called *Benediction*, he singeth the treble and prayseth God for his high omnipotency.

The

The second *Honour*, he singeth the Contertenor, & prayseth God for his infinite wisdom. The third *Praying*, he singeth the Tenor, and extolleth the wonderfull goodnes of God, and all his vertues, his noblenes, and excellency, & all that is in him. The fourth *Thanksgiving*, he singeth the Basse and giueth thanks to GOD for all his creatures, & for al the benefits which he hath bestowed on them.

## CHAPTER. 12.

*How Desire learned to sing.*

**D***esire* was now much delighted, both with the manner of singing, and also with the song, to whom *Desire of God* said, now be think thy selfe whither thou wilt returne from hence or no. **DE.** Whither can I goe, that I may better my selfe, especially, considering I am come hither with so great labour & difficulty. For finding my selfe to be well entertayned here, and to liue in peace, and all contentement by no meanes will I depart from hence, for the old Prouerbe sayeth, he that is well let him not chaunge his place, therefore Sir, I cannot be perswaded to depart, except you will by violence expell me. **DESIRE OF GOD.** It is not our custome to expell any against their willes, rather doe we entreate such as enter in, hither, that they will make their abodes here amongst vs. Yet that they may knowe, that wee  
admit

admit none for our owne necessity : sometimes we aske of them whither they will depart . But seing thou hast determined to continue here, thou must not liue and be idle here. For no idle body dwelleth here, or that doth not spend his time in good exercises. DE. What must I doe?

DESIRE OF GOD. Whatsoeuer is commanded to thee. DE. If I am commanded nothing, shall I be idle ? DESIRE OF GOD.

Thou shalt sing, and giue thanks, and prayse to God, for thou art admitted hither especially to sing. And whilest thou art in doing, that which thou art commaded, thou maiest sing to thy self lest thou be troubled with idle thoughts.

But if thou desire to profit much, and greatly to please our Lord and Master, and to insinuate thy selfe into his friendship, as much as thou canst, (if nothing else be commanded to thee,)

conuerse and conferre with him alone. Then shalt thou heare what he will speake in thee, & thou shalt learne many secretes that he will reueale to thee, and thou shalt become his most inwarde friend. DE. May any enter into his

chamber, and speake with him ? DESIRE OF GOD. Yea truely, so that he be accom-

panied with *Humility*. And farther I assure thee he taketh especiall delight, when any will come to him and seeke to awake him. For it is his nature not to desire to be alone, and be a man ne-

uer

uer so meane or base, yet doth he delight to haue him desire his presence. And so great is his dignity & worthines that he regardeth not his person, or maketh any difference of their birthes that sue to him, regarding only the humility of their mindes. One man is as deare to him as an other, and he created them all of one and the same matter. Yea more, the more base and vile the person is, so that he debase and deject himselfe; the greater doth he declare his loue towards him. And to say truth those which dwell in this Monastery amongst vs, the greatest part of them (some fewe excepted) are borne but of meane & base parentage. For such as the world contemneth as abjects, those doth God choose for his faithfulest seruantes, that none of this society should flatter themselues: that they deserued of themselues to be admitted hither, and not through the speciall grace and goodnes of God. If therefore thou desire to continue amongst vs, and to sing amongst our other singers, and desire farther that thy singing may be pleasing, and acceptable to God, thou must labour to obserue these foure things. The first is *A goodwill*. The second *Humility*. The third *Patience*. The fourth *Charny*. Which if thou doest, thou shalt neuer erre in singing. And although sometimes thou chance to neglect some part, yet by diligēt obseruation, thou shalt

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thalt easely come into measure againe. With the first measure or tune, which is *A good will*, thou shalt sing the plaine song, which is (as it were) the ground & fondation of the others. With the second and third, I meane *Humility & Patience*, thou shalt sing the Contertenor, for *Humility & Patience*, are contrary to selfe will. With the fourth, which is *Charity*, thou shalt explyne, and declare the sound and tune, of the Organs, and that with exceeding sweetnes & harmony of thy soule & spirit. And if it fortune that thou be out of tune presently, haue recourse to the first note or measure. Also if thou chaunce to sing contrary to thy fellowes, obserue him that directeth thee, who will bring thee sone into tune againe, through his helpe and assistance, and with the loue of our Lord & Master. And in all thy singing obserue this one thing diligently, that thou forget not to eate the fruit, which thou didest gather, in the house of *Humility*, I meane *Distrust of thy selfe*, for the more thou attaynest to the Loue and Desire of God, the better thou shalt knowe him, and sweeter shalt thou finde him. To conclude the more thou shalt offer of this fruit to my Lord and Master, the greater shalt thou finde his loue and friendship towards thee, for willingly doth he eate of it, and most pleasing is it to him.

*How Desire of God, brought Desire into the chamber of his Lord and Master, and of the manner of Praying.*

**D**E. One thing there remayneth yet which I would entreate of you, that now considering. You haue graunted me, to be a seruant of this house, you will farther bring me, to the knowledge of my Master, that I may se him & kisse his hand. **DESIRE OF GOD.** Follow me in & I will graunt thy desire. Now beganne *Desire* to feare and to tremble, thinking that he must speake with a King of so great Majesty in his priuy chamber, and so great was his feare and his astoyishment, that neither could he or durst he presume to come neare him, but now beganne to thinke to goe back againe. But aduising better with himselfe, and thinking that he was a sweete, a noble, and an affable King, and curteous, and gentle to all men, he tooke hart againe trusting wholly to the gentlenes of him. Here *Desire of God* bidde him stay at the dore, vntill he went in to his Master, and told him how *Desire* desired to speake with him. And now againe beganne *Desire* to be doubtfull, how, and in what manner he should speake to his Lord and Master. When *Desire of God* comming to him tould him, he had acquainted his Master with his being there, and therefore badde

badde him goe in, and he would stay for him there. Now *Desire* beganne with exceeding great reuerence to enter the house, and goe into the haule, who so sone as he espied his Lord & Master, he fell prostrate on the ground, and beganne to weepe, not presuming to lift vp either his head or eyes. For he had not forgot, what an enemy he had beene sometime to his Master, with how many wronges and iniuries he had offended him, how ill and vnreuerently he had sometimes spoken of him, with the remembrance hereof, he was not able to speake, but stode weeping and sighing, seing himselfe present before the Majesty of him he had so highly offended. OVR L. What meaneth this weeping? What doest thou here? speakest thou nothing? rise and say what thou wouldest haue. DE. What may I presume to speake O Lord, in presence of thy Majesty, I acknowledge my selfe vnworthy, to open my vncleane mouth in the presence of such a Lord, admit me to be silent, and to stand still and sigh, and to bewaile and lament my owne iniquity. OVR LORD. Wherefore then art thou come hither. DE. I of my selfe neuer came in hither, for I hold my selfe vnworthy to abide in thy house, much lesse worthy to enter thy chamber. OVR LORD. Who then brought thee hither? DE. Thy selfe sweete Lord, thou hast drawn

me, thou hast made me cry, and call vpon thee, thou hast commanded thy gates to be opened, and that I should be brought in hither to thee. My selfe am wholly ignorant of the cause hereof, or what hath moued thee to it, or what neede thou hast of me. For I hold it more sufficient, then that so vnworthy a wretch as I am, should be thought worthy to be the meanest of thy seruants, & a bondman & slaue in this thy house: although of my selfe I cannot deserue that, and should my selfe vnworthy to obteyne it. But considering that it hath pleased thee to call me, and that it pleaseth thee, I shall abide with thee, and speake to thee: open thou O Lord I beseech thee my lippes, and teach me what I shall say in thy presence. Plant in mee thy spirit of feare and reuerence, that thy Majesty be not offended by me, or vnreuerently worshipped, or vn honorably entreated from this time forward of so vile a sinner as I acknowledge my selfe. For it cannot be done without offering thee great iniurie. And rather had I kil my selfe then to offer contempt, ignominie or disgrace to thy Majesty. For therby should I offer great iniury and contempt to all Angels, and Archangels, and the whole fellowshippe of heaven, who with so great reuerence, and seruour doe loue and honor thee. Teach me therefore O Lord, what I shal say or do to thee. For I wholly  
resigne

resigne my self into thy hands. Grant me therefore sweete Lord the spirit of *Humilitie* where-with I may serue thee, thy house & all thy seruāts; let my seruice be acceptable to thee, & be thou O Lord honored and glorified in me.

## CHAPTER. 14.

*How our Lord instructed Desire, how he should behaue himselfe.*

**O**VR LO. Rise vp and lay away all manner of feare. If hēceforth thou wilt be vertuous and Godly, & behaue thy selfe according to thy duety: I will neuer remēber the wrongs and iniuries thou hast done me. And that thou mayest henceforth amend and become better, I will deliuer thee only foure wordes, which if thou remember, and wilt only obserue, shall be very beneficiall & auailable to thee. The first two are. *I and Thou*. The other two. *A Seruant & a King*. These foure wordes when thou canst well exercise and practize, will bring thee to great perfection & purity of hart: and will defend & deliuer thee from all perturbatiōs of the minde, & will instruct thee to liue peaceably & friendly, & conuerse quietly with al men. **DE.** Voutsafe O lord to direct me, how I may exercise these foure words. **OVR LO.** Thou maist refer all thy exercises to these foure words, for they are of great importāce, & whole volumes might be written of them alone, which of them

selues were sufficient to teach great perfection. Therefore when thou resoluest to speake vnto me, if then thou finde thy self cold, distracted, or discontented for any thing that thou art cōmanded, thinke to thy selfe that with these wordes alone I speake to thee. *I & Thou*. And then exclude from thy minde the whole world, & what soeuer thou hast heard or seene in thy life, imagining that none, but *I and Thou* are left in this world. The other two wordes, *Servant & King*, will auaille thee in liuing with thy Brothers in this house. The first, wherof *Servant* will profit thee herein, that thou maist imagine thy self, the seruant of all men, whereby thou shalt attayne, *Humilitie and Obedience*. The other word *King*, will serue thee to remember that thou art *King* and commander ouer thy selfe. For such Kings doe I enrich & loade with al treasures. For this time be contēt with this directiō, & haue peace & quietnes, & so depart. DE. Wherefore O Lord doest thou bidde me depart, & wilt that I forsake thy presence? OVR LO. Thinke not thy selfe worthy to abide alwaies with me, but at such times only as I wil, & shal send for thee, and then take thou heede that thou doe not offend in vaine glory or presumption. For according to my owne will & pleasure I wil cal thee. But before thou goe hence, leaue thy hart here with me, that whersoever thou tōuerse thy better

ter part may be with me. DE. Most willingly sweet Lord, I comit my hart to thy protection. OVR LO. I receaue it from thy willing offer, & yet thinke not alwaies that I will doe so, for sometimes for thy benefit, & to humble thee I wil refuse to keep it. And this one thing I wold not haue thee ignorant of, which peraduenture is vnknowne to thee; That the greater comfort & consolation I desire to send my friends: with the more troubles, aduersities, & afflictions, I vse to visit them. But if thou wilt leaue *Good wil* thy dogge here with me, he may continually remayne in my presence, & shal neuer goe from me, except thou thy selfe wilt, yet neuerthelesse daylie must thou commend him to mee. DE. Why is it needeful that I commend him to thee daylie? sufficeth it not that I doe it once. OVR LORD. No, and not for feare, least I should forget thee; but lest thou thy selfe proue vnmindefull of me, and that thou mayest haue occasion euer to remember and haue mee in thy minde, whereby I may gratifie and rewarde thee daylie, and according to thy necessity and want may helpe and succour thee. For nothing it is to me whither thou be mindefull or vnmindefull of me. DE. I yeeld thee most humble thanks my sweete Lord and Master. Long since haue I proued thy goodnes and beneuolence, for which thou workest all thinges in

vs only for our saluation and benefit.

CHAPTER. 15.

*How Desire put in practise the foure wordes of his Lord and Master, and what benefit he receaued thereby.*

**T**Hus *Desire* departing out, of the chamber of his Lord and Master, & leauing his hart still behinde with him; he found *Desire of God* without the dore, expecting his comming, to whome he said. What hast thou done so long time within? thinkest thou my Lord & Master, taketh delight & is pleased with many wordes? beleeeue me, thou shalt sometime preuaile more with him, with one word then with a hundered. D E. Me thinketh I haue stayed to short a time with him. D E. OF GOD. Now viewe & consider all this house, considering thou art receaued in hither. D E. I will goe to my chamber. D E. OF GOD. Goe in the name of God. Now *Desire* did daylie reuolue in his minde the foure wordes, which his Lord & Master had deliuered him, & oft would say to himselfe. *I & Thou. Seruant and King.* And whensoever hee spake them, whither he deuided them, or joyned them yet euer they agreed well together. For joyning the first, which is I. With the third, which is *A Seruant*, he said to himselfe I pronounce them rightly. For, for the loue of my Lord & master. I am a seruant. Then joyning the first with the last

last which is a *King*. Sill he seemed to pronounce them rightly. For being the seruant of God, he said he was a *King*. For to *serue God* : that is to *raigne*. Againe speaking them an other way & joyning, *King* with *Seruant*. Still they agreed well together. For the King of heaven to the intent he might make me a King, made himselfe a *Seruant*, and whosoever will be a King it is necessary that first he make himselfe a *Seruant*. Thus did *Desire* for his benefit many wayes joyne these foure wordes together. For if at any time he were oppressed with any externall aduersity, presently would he say to himselfe, I nothing regard what men say or thinke of me, not esteeming whither they honor or cōtenne me. I am a seruant or bondman, & these things are meete for such an on. If he felt himself to be tempted with any voluptuous pleasure, then said he to himselfe. Be it farre from me, that am a King to become, the slaue of filthy vice and pleasure. So vile a seruitude befitteth not my Nobility. Thus receaued *Desire* exceeding benefits by these words: whither he joyned them in order, or placed them contrarily. For both did they quēch naughty desires kindled in him & appeased & mitigated all his aduersities. But now cōsidering the explication of these words may be infinit, least I seeme to be tedious, I refer the rest to the good consideration of others.

F I N I S.



AN APPENDIX, GATHERED  
out of the worke of *Ludonicus Blotius* an  
*Abbot*, conteyning briefly, the chiefe  
matter of the former Dialogue.

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*Thirteene short Precepts, most necessaric for all  
men, that desire to attaine to the per-  
fect loue of God.*

The first.



Or the loue of thy Sauour Ie-  
sus Christ, who suffered most  
bitter torments for thy redēp-  
tion, renounce and forsake all  
sensuall delights & pleasures:  
whensoever thou wouldest, or  
desirest, to heare, see, smell, taste, touch, or  
speake any thing: call to thy remembrance,  
and thinke that thou art then to obey God, and  
reason speaking in thee, and not thy sensuall  
appetite, which shall moue and stirre thee. Be  
also ready, and content to want the delightes  
of the spirit, according to the pleasure and or-  
dinance of God. And whensoever thou art  
comforted

comforted with an inward sweetnes, and consolation; rest not therein, but beware thou abuse it not according to thy owne proper pleasure.

2. Keepe euer a most carefull watch ouer thy seeing, hearing, and ouer thy speaking, that they decline not after vnlawfull, vaine and vnprofitable thinges. Thou must be most vigilant, and warie in speaking, that thou vtter not more wordes, or in other manner, then shal be seeme thee. Let all thy talke be short, plaine, and voide of strife and contention. Gouverne, and order carefully, all parts of thy body. Auoide, and shunne immoderate laughter, and all leuitie, and wantonnesse in thy behauiour.

3. Loue not any creature with an inordinate affection, but mortifie thy selfe to all transitory things, and carry a minde free from such allurements: for in such a freedome is conteyned the most true, and pleasant life.

4. Kill and destroy with all possible care, through a full resignation and deniall of thy selfe: all thy passions, and sinfull affections, and especiall thy stubborne and obstinate self-will. Loue only before all thinges, the holie will of God, and still wish that it may be done, and to that, wholly submit thy selfe, in such sort, that whatsoever God will haue done, that same thou shalt desire also. In all things, and at all times,

all times, preferre the prayse & honor of God, before thy owne profit & priuate commodity.

5. In all thinges that shall happen, wisely expect the prouidence of God, & carefully commit thy selfe and all thine to him. Knowing that he hath a care ouer thee. All aduersity and tribulation (be it internall or externall) take as sent from the hand of God. Beleeuing for certayne that he doth sende it thee, for thy farther benefit and good of thy soule. Beare it therefore patiently euen to the last houre, giuing thanks to God, and continually praying him, through whose permission and ordinance such a thing is befallne thee. And be not troubled or moued for any iniury, that shall be offered to thee, nor impatiently complaine thereof to any man: but calling to remembrance thy owne iniquity and ingratitude, hould thy selfe worthy of all men to be reprehended, blamed, contemned, vexed, scorned, and trode on. Why shouldest thou be dejected for the words of men, or for any thing that thou canst suffer from them? Giue men leaue to thinke & speake their plesures of thee, let the world, and the Diuell rage as they will at thee, considering it commeth but by Gods permission. Doe thou in the meane time, leane wholly to our LORD IESVS, and silently keepe peace continually in thy hart, If thou doest truly consider, how  
shame.

Shamefull and sharpe thinges, thy Creator and Redeemer IESVS CHRIST hath suffered for thee; most patiently thou wouldest endure any affliction whatsoever.

6. Imagine thy self more base, & abject, than any other creature remembring thy owne vilenesse, and what thy sinnes haue deserued. If thou thinke any good of thy selfe considering thou hast none, if vnwisely thou like thy owne doinges and conceaue well of them, herein thou shewest thy exceeding pride, for which, thou stinkest before the face of God. What good soeuer is in thee, it is Gods, and not thine, beware therefore in vsurping that, which appertayneth to God. Neither boast thereof, or seeke to please thy selfe: in that vvhich shall so highly displease almightie God. Farther, think thy selfe vnworthy of the smallest benefitte it shall please God to bestowe on thee.

7 Obey and followe in all lawfull thinges, the will and commandement of other men, thy owne selfe-will clearely abandoned, and all appetites and desires vanquished and overcome. Most readely submit thy selfe to Obedience, for nothing is more acceptable to God then Obedience: and disobedience the thing which God most hateth.

8 Content thy selfe with fewe and simple thinges, following the example of our Saviour Christ

Christ and his most blessed Mother. Delight neither in vaine apparell, nor gluttonous diet. But thinke with thy selfe, how vnthankfull thou shouldest be, if thou shouldest murmur for thy meate, not being curiously dressed; considering our Sauour IESVS CHRIST, was offered for thy sake, most bitter gall and vinegre to drinke. If thou want sometime euen those thinges which are needefull for thee, yet euer honour God, and put thy trust and confidence in him, who neuer forsaketh those that serue him, although for their greater good he suffer them sometime to want.

9 Loue all men sincerely, as thy brothers and sisters, representing the Image of GOD thy Creator: Hartely wish the good of all men. Shewe to all men, especially to thy enemies, and persecutors, a milde, and gentle countenance, and behauiour, and let all thy wordes be ciuill to them, : suppressing in thy selfe all bitternesse of hart, with a mildnesse, and sweetnesse of holy Charity. Be euer ready to comfort, and aide all men in necessity. Haue pittie and compassion vpon all in misery, rejoyce at other mens vertues, as at thy owne: and take other mens miseries, as the misery of thy selfe, imagining thou art subiect to as much as any other.

10 Contemne no man; banish from thy hart,  
with

with all possible diligence, euill suspicion, and rash judgment. Inure thy selfe to thinke well of all men. Interpret with simplicitie the sayings, and doings of others to the best. Prefferre plainly all other men before thy selfe. Imagine thou art more vile, and ingrate, then any other man liuing. Say to thy selfe, say also to GOD, I am vnworthy to treade vpon the earth. Oh that thou diddest vnderstand how willingly thou oughtest vndertake all seruile vvorkes for Gods sake: how gladly thou shouldest obey and serue other for him. For our Lord and Redeemer IESVS CHRIST, himselfe being made man, became a seruant, and with humility washed the feete of his Disciples.

11. Labour to please God, rather then men, and wish rather to be despised then honoured.

12 Feede and nourish in thy selfe holy and vertuous thoughtes, and euery where attende the presence of GOD, hauing thy thoughts continually fixed on him, whether thou feele sensible deuotion or no. These wordes following, being oft thought vpon, will helpe greatly to recollect thy spirittes, and reuerently to thinke on the presence of GOD. *O Lord God, thou art euer present to aide and assist me; thou inhabitest and art abiding in the secretes of my soule.*

13 What~

13. Whatsoeuer is not of god, regard it not, nor thinke that it doth appertaine to thee, so mayest thou with a quiet minde attend his seruice. *And one thing is necessary*, which to obtayne, thou must labour, endeavour, and doe vwhat lyeth in thy power, yet so, that thou wholly distrust thy selfe, and all thou canst doe, but haue all thy confidence in God alone, in his mercy and goodnesse, and in the helpe and assistance of his heavenly grace. For without God, thou canst doe nothing but sinne. Reade ouer againe, and againe, these short rules, and examine thy life and behauiour by them.

AN INDEX OF THE CHAPTERS  
of this Dialogue, diuided into  
three partes.

THE first Chapter. *Desire* goeth on Pilgrimage.

2. He instructeth spiritual Pastors & Prelats.
3. Of the same Argument.
4. Of the house of *Humility*.
5. How *Vaine-glory* watcheth at the gates.
6. By what meanes we may attaine to *Humility*.
7. Of the purpose of *Humility*, and her conference with *Desire*.
8. *Humility* continueth her discourse.
9. *Humility* still continueth her speach, and teacheth how to fight against sinne.

10. Of

10. Of concupiscence of the flesh.
11. Of concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life.
12. How the other wicked Maydens may be overcome.
13. All malice may be expelled.
14. Of other exercises of Humility.
15. Of the vertues that be daughters to Humility.
16. How all creatures be good, and yet none is good but God.
17. Of the same Argument.
18. Of the manners & conditions of Simplicity
19. How purity of hart, and Innocency might be preserved.
20. Of Pouerty.
21. Of Obedience.
22. Of Chastity.
23. The Conclusion of the first part.

## THE SECOND PART.

1. Of Patience.
2. How God may be known by his creatures.

## THE THIRD PART.

1. Of the probation and exercise of the Loue of God.
2. Of the loue of our Neighbour.
3. Of the Loue of God, & of our Neighbour, and of an other degree of loue, and of the function thereof.

4. Of the same.
5. Of two other Purposes of the *Loue of God*, to wit, to desire nothing, and to thinke vpon nothing.
6. Of the same, and of prayer also.
7. Of the office of the *Loue of God* in an other degree, & a continuation of that, which he beganne of the manner of praying.
8. Of the third degree of Loue.
9. Of those thinges which the *Loue of God* hateth.
10. How the Loue of God brought desire into the house.
11. How Desire of God prepared Desire to eate of the fruit he gaue him.
12. How Desire learned to sing.
13. How Desire of God brought Desire into the chamber of his Lord and Master, and of the manner of praying.
14. How our Lord gaue Desire good directions, to gouerne him selfe well.
15. Desire exercised the foure wordes, which our Lord taught him, and what benefit hee reaped thereby.

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FINIS.

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